

# Support – A Vital Tool for Young Innovative Entrepreneurs in the Barents Region

ENPI Kolarctic “Young Innovative Entrepreneurs” project study





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Anzelika Krastina

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**Writer:** Anzelika Krastina

**Cover:** Annett Pée

**Layout:** Lapland UAS/ Minttu Merivirta

Lapland University of Applied Sciences

Jokiväylä 11 C

96300 Rovaniemi, Finland

Tel. +358 20 798 6000

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# FOREWORD

This study has been carried out within the ENPI Kolarctic funded project called “Young Innovative Entrepreneurs” (YIE) and aims to contribute to a better understanding of existing structures and measures to support entrepreneurship at the European level and in the Barents Region. The knowledge regarding already existing support for entrepreneurs should then contribute to further development of support structures aiming in particular at young entrepreneurs.

The YIE project was initiated in 2010, just at the peak of world-wide economic turbulence. According to the project plan, the overall objective of YIE project is to support the economic and social development of the Barents Region by facilitating innovative entrepreneurial initiatives by young people in order to improve employment and entrepreneurship. The specific objective of the project is to create a region-wide support system that will enhance the development and implementation of innovative business ideas across the borders by young entrepreneurs in the Barents Region.

(Young Innovative Entrepreneurs 2010.) The support system can comprise various components. The project narrows down its main activities to the creation of a cross-border business network of young, aspiring as well as experienced entrepreneurs; the creation of an innovative entrepreneurial environment by establishing InnoBarentsLab; and the provision of training and education for existing and aspiring entrepreneurs. Thus, support in various forms is considered as a vital tool for entrepreneurship and innovativeness among the youth in the Barents Region.

Having served as an educator of business students for more than a decade at Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences and later Lapland





University of Applied Sciences, I have come to the conclusion that there are few “born” entrepreneurs. However, an effort to unlock the potential of many young talents, helping them to discover great entrepreneurial opportunities and their own capabilities, can lead to much better results in terms of start-ups and the advancement of existing entrepreneurs, as it provides them the possibility to practice and exercise entrepreneurship. I have been one of the initiators of the project and have lead the process of establishing InnoBarentsLab (IBL), an institution within Lapland University of Applied Sciences (lead partner in the project). IBL has been created as a study environment where entrepreneurial activity and innovation learning is blended into the daily education process, facilitating young entrepreneurship.

Various forms of support for entrepreneurship exist in all participating countries in the project. However, for an entrepreneur operating in the area, it is often very challenging to identify the most suitable support organization available. There is a need to gather all possible information together. This would help both entrepreneurship support stakeholders, as well as acting young entrepreneurs to better orientate themselves in the labyrinths of existing support across the Barents Region. This study therefore partly serves the purpose of providing a summary of relevant information and contact details of already existing support for entrepreneurs.

**Anzelika Krastina,**

Teacher and project manager,  
Lapland University of Applied Sciences,  
School of Business and Culture

# 1 Introduction

This study seeks to identify and describe various practices and initiatives of entrepreneurship promotion and support. Special attention is paid to the promotion of youth entrepreneurship, the practices and existing structures of support for youth entrepreneurship development in the Barents Region. The study consists of two parts. Part one identifies different measures of entrepreneurship promotion and support. Part two reflects on existing entrepreneurship support structures that are applicable within Barents Region countries.

The Barents Region is the name given to the cross-border cooperation between the Northern parts of Finland, Norway and Sweden and the Northwestern part of Russia. It is also referred to as the Barents Euro-Arctic Region - a platform for intergovernmental and interregional cooperation. The Barents Region can be seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Barents region in a map (Indigenous Entrepreneurship 2014)

Entrepreneurship plays a key role in better economic recovery and further growth in the Barents Region. Youth entrepreneurship can be a vital tool in solving many socio-economic problems, such as mass youth unemployment problems, or youth migration to the Southern parts of Barents Region countries. Youth entrepreneurship can be a viable tool for increasing innovativeness and new expertise development, creating new workplaces that will result in lower regional and local unemployment.

In order to use the existing potential of young human capital, an environment for entrepreneurship and innovativeness should be created. It is recognized at the national and European Union levels that more attention must be given to the development of various measures to promote entrepreneurship, especially among young people. The

*”Supporting youth entrepreneurship should become a priority for the regional development.”*

European Union in general has relatively low levels of entrepreneurial activity compared to the United States and Japan.

Accordingly, low entrepreneurial activity, especially among young people, is an important problem also in the Barents Region. In recent years more attention has been given to large investment projects in big industries in the Barents Region, while very little attention has been paid to the small entrepreneurs and youth entrepreneurship problems in particular. Youth entrepreneurship is defined differently in different situations. In this particular paper youth or young people is defined as those aged between 18 and 35 and entrepreneurs refers to both aspiring and existing entrepreneurs.

The young people of the Barents Region should be considered as a golden reserve of human capital in the Northern area. They will shape the future of the region. Taking into account the challenges of the region and the upheavals in the global economy, including unemployment, more attention should be paid to creating alternative economic activities for young people in the form of self-employment and entrepreneurship programmes.

Support for youth entrepreneurship should become a priority in regional development. This study has been carried out within the ENPI Kolarctic funded project, Young Innovative Entrepreneurs (YIE). The YIE project intends to give an impulse to encouraging youth entrepreneurship in the Barents Region. It is run by partners from the Northern parts of four programme participating countries: Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia.

Many common youth problems and challenges have been identified across the borders; among others they include high youth unemployment, social problems and youth migration to the South, or to bigger cities, for jobs. Therefore, the partners in the YIE project aim to find best possible tools to create viable support for youth entrepreneurship and, in addition to that, bring young or aspiring entrepreneurs together in order to enhance the potential for cooperation across the borders.

Even though various support structures are available for entrepreneurship in all four countries represented in the project, it is obvious that more effort at the national and regional level should be made to deal with youth entrepreneurship issues, otherwise the creative and innovative potential, as well as human capital, represented by the young people will be lost. Therefore, YIE project is looking for innovative responses to the dual challenge of stimulating entrepreneurship and encouraging cross-border cooperation at the same time.

The European Arctic region is full of innovation and entrepreneurship opportunities and the hope is that young people will recognize the opportunities across the borders,



that they will learn to cooperate and network and that they will utilize these opportunities for new innovative cross-border entrepreneurship initiatives. The YIE project is just one among many existing youth entrepreneurship support measures and therefore it is essential to map and understand the variety of support that is available for youth entrepreneurship development, as well as to constantly develop new, more effective and innovative tools to stimulate young people to start their own business.

It is hoped that this study will give an insight for various stakeholders in the different available support tools and the importance of the support measures, while entrepreneurs can become familiar with the wide range of existing support structures and use their services for further business development.

# **2 Support Measures for Youth Entrepreneurship Promotion**

## 2.1 POLICIES TO ENCOURAGE YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Many states and local governments that understand the economic and social benefits of entrepreneurship, already implement entrepreneur-friendly policies with the aim to support local entrepreneurship. Almost every country has a long-term economic development strategy and entrepreneurship is viewed as an integral part of this strategy. However, there is often very little attention paid to the promotion of youth entrepreneurship in particular.

The task of the YIE project is to promote entrepreneurship among young people and to encourage them to engage in business development for start-ups and further growth. Therefore we are interested in how youth entrepreneurship is promoted within the economic strategies of the participating countries.

During this study it became clear that there are not too many governmental or other entrepreneurship interventions targeting young people in particular and, therefore, overall entrepreneurship policies and support measures are mainly applied also in the case of youth entrepreneurship promotion. Youth entrepreneurship promotion, however, needs specific measures. There are particular barriers to entrepreneurship that young people face, such as less access to financing, lack of work experience due to young age, lack of specific knowledge, lack of networks and many others. The particular barriers to youth entrepreneurship in the Barents Region should be studied and understood in order to create an appropriate entrepreneurship promotion and support environment.

According to the OECD, there is no single policy model for the promotion of entrepreneurial activity among young people and the programmes developed in different cultural and national settings tend to show a broad diversity in their content (Putting the Young in Business 2001, 41). Recently, the need to encourage entrepreneurship among young people was recognized at global, European and regional level. The aim is to meet the challenges of the world-wide economic slump, which has created high youth unemployment in many countries and regions. However, there are several viable measures to awaken an interest among young people in starting their own businesses. Entrepreneurship promotion projects and initiatives can have different goals and types of interventions, but many good lessons can be learnt from different practices.

Hopefully, in the future there will be a place where to develop an integrated Barents Region youth entrepreneurship programme supported by the Barents Region states. However, it is clear that none of the existing entrepreneurship programmes or practices can, or should be, directly adapted.

According to a study carried out by the European Microfinance Network, young people are treated as part of the adult population. Their specific needs and particular entrepreneurial potential, as well as their contribution to economic and social progress, are underestimated. The study suggests that youth entrepreneurship initiatives should provide a set of measures that make it easier for young people to



start and run their own business. (EMN Study 2012, 4.) Ulrich Schoof (2006, xiii–xiv) invites to identify the most pressing problems and constraints and to develop and implement an appropriate combination of different measures so as to achieve a comprehensive youth entrepreneurship policy. With an eye to the identified needs and constraints in every country to the development of an individual, tailor-made approach, Schoof argues that an individual policy mix of integrated initiatives that responds to different economic social and cultural situations, as well as to particular entrepreneurial framework conditions, is required.

The available studies by the International Labour Organization (ILO) (*Towards Entrepreneurial Culture for the Twenty First Century 2006*) and the OECD (*Green 2013*) indicate there is a set of crucial factors for youth entrepreneurial engagement. These factors should be taken into account when dealing with the development of specific youth entrepreneurship promotion policies and initiatives. Promotion of an entrepreneurial culture among young people is one of the factors. Cultural values can have an important influence on entrepreneurial behaviour. A negative perception of entrepreneurship by family, and society in general, or a lack of business role models, can discourage young people from engaging in entrepreneurship. Therefore, an environment should be created where entrepreneurship is considered as a viable and even prestigious career choice. This can be achieved through the promotion of role models, PR campaigns, and different youth networking events.

Entrepreneurship education is another important element that needs to be taken more into account. Such education can foster the entrepreneurial attitudes and skills necessary in the business environment. Henry Ford once said: “A country’s competitiveness starts not on the factory floor, or in the engineering lab. It starts in the classroom.” More and more countries recognize the need to integrate entrepreneurship education into schools of all levels. The adoption of enterprise education is still considered rather low. In this regard, schools have been criticized for inadequate curricula and lack of flexibility in study programmes. The lack of qualified teachers with an entrepreneurial background is also a factor.

Better linkage between business and education should be attained and a better environment and infrastructure should be created. In 2004 the European Commission called for the introduction of entrepreneurship education into the national curriculum from primary school to university. In recent years the Nordic Countries, including Sweden, Norway and Finland, have actively engaged in the development of enterprise education. Also in Russia more and more attention has been given in recent years to the introduction of entrepreneurship education.

Access to financing, i.e. start-up funds and microfinance, is still one of the most pressing problems, especially in the case of youth entrepreneurship. Young entrepreneurs can face many barriers in this regard, such as a lack of creditworthiness, lacking business experience, unfamiliarity with documentation procedures, or simply ignorance of funding opportunities. Additionally, in ILO studies (*Towards Entrepreneurial Culture for the Twenty First Century 2006*; *Building Business and Entrepreneurship Awareness 2011*) and an OECD study (*Green 2013*) such issues as a satisfactory regulatory framework for microenterprises, business support and





development services, on-the-job training, youth trade fairs, online business networks and others are named as among the critical factors in the development of youth entrepreneurship. The promotion of youth entrepreneurship can take many forms and involve a variety of stakeholders. The OECD offers a schematic presentation of the most important components when considering a viable policy programme for youth entrepreneurship stimulation.

Figure 2 identifies important players in youth business promotion from governmental, private and non-government organizations to education institutions. Promotional elements can vary from specific enterprise education, to start-up assistance, networking, or intergenerational transfers of knowledge and practices.

## 2.2 YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVES AT EU LEVEL

In response to a severe economic crisis in 2008, the EU drafted an action plan for better promotion of entrepreneurship across Europe. The Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan (2013), further referred to as the Action Plan, has three main pillars. Firstly, it aims to increase entrepreneurial education and training in order to create a new generation of entrepreneurs. Secondly, it aims to create an environment where entrepreneurs can flourish and grow. It proposes to create effective support and get rid of barriers to entrepreneurship development. Thirdly, it intends to create role models and use them to reach out to potential stakeholders.

Unlike other similar documents, this action plan pays special attention to youth entrepreneurship promotion. The plan promises some practical measures, such as the launching in 2014 of a micro-finance facility which will target vulnerable groups, including persons who have lost, or are at risk of losing, their job, or who have difficulty in entering or re-entering the labour market. Additionally, there is a plan to set up support schemes for young business starters and social entrepreneurs



under the European Social Fund framework. (Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan 2013.)

The European Commission invites member states to create programmes that provide counselling, training and qualification, mentoring and access to microcredit for young entrepreneurs. The establishment and running of entrepreneurship education schemes, based on successful models, for the unemployed to enable them to (re-)enter business life as entrepreneurs are also advised. In 2010 the EU launched the European Progress Microfinance Facility. The aim is to increase the availability of micro credit for SME's. It gives access to loans under 25 000 EUR for starting up and developing small companies. The task of Progress Microfinance is to enlist providers of microcredit in the EU. Thus, it does not directly finance entrepreneurs, but facilitates lending.

Usually, microfinance providers are banks, non-bank microfinance organizations, or not-for-profit microcredit institutions.

Currently, Progress Microfinance has been extended to 15 EU

member countries. (Microfinance in Europe 2013; Progress Microfinance 2013; Implementation of the European Progress Microfinance Facility 2012; Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan 2013.)

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs is a European exchange programme for young entrepreneurs. It gives the possibility to new businesses, or aspiring entrepreneurs, to learn from experienced business people who have a small company in one of the participating countries. The exchange of experience takes place during a stay with the experienced entrepreneur, which helps the new entrepreneurs acquire the skills

needed to run a small firm. The duration of the exchange is one to six months. New entrepreneurs will benefit from on-the-job training in a small or medium-sized enterprise. This will ease the successful start of their business, or strengthen their new enterprise. New entrepreneurs can also benefit from access to new markets, international cooperation and potential possibilities for collaboration with business partners abroad. The stay is partially funded by the Erasmus programme. In order to participate in the programme, young or aspiring entrepreneurs have to apply through



a local contact point, which can be found on the website of the programme. (Erasmus 2013.)

The European Social Fund (ESF) is one of the financial instruments that support entrepreneurship development measures in the EU. The new ESF 2014-2020 programme has introduced various changes, the most significant among which concerns youth and youth entrepreneurship. Helping young people enter the labour market will be a top priority for the ESF in all EU countries. Twenty percent of European Social Fund (ESF) money will be used to combat poverty through labour market integration and at least €3 billion in ESF funding will be used to combat youth



unemployment. Member States can identify the most appropriate priorities according to the overall goals of the ESF. For example, Finland has chosen as priority to boost entrepreneurship through this programme. Assistance in the establishment and development of small and medium-sized companies plays a key role in the effort to reach these objectives. Similarly, in Sweden, better skills for business development are included on the priority list. The funding of the European Social Fund can be used, for example, to train the personnel and management of a company, to develop the operations of a company, or groups of companies, or to seek advice and expertise on business activities. (European Parliament 2013; Entrepreneurship 2013.)

The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) has been the main financial mechanism to implement the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) between partner countries and Russia. It is also the main fund to finance actions at the Barents Region cross-border cooperation level. From 2014 onwards ENPI will be replaced by ENI (the European Neighbourhood Instrument). The ENI will continue to provide the bulk of funding to the European Neighbourhood countries, essentially through bilateral, regional and cross-border co-operation programmes. Provisionally, further youth entrepreneurship support and development actions within the Barents Region could take place under this programme. (ENPI 2013; The New European Neighbourhood Instrument 2011.)

## 2.3 INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES IN YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROMOTION

As mentioned earlier, the promotion of youth entrepreneurship can take many forms by a variety of actors. On the one hand there are many different initiatives taking place all over the world. On the other hand the literature suggests that contributions and actions to promote youth entrepreneurship are not yet at a sufficient level. The OECD handbook *Shooting for the Moon: Good Practices in Local Youth Entrepreneurship Support* underlines that there is a need to develop capacities for effective design and implementation policies that are tailored to local needs. It defines three main dimensions in the field of youth entrepreneurship support and principles of good practices. The study suggests learning from good practices in order to create youth business promotion strategies suitable for the local entrepreneurial ecosystem. The OECD study selects best practices based on the following dimensions: opportunity creation, entrepreneurship education and start-up support. (*Shooting for the Moon* 2009.)

Opportunity creation refers to those practices, where at the local community level strategies are designed and real infrastructures created that enable a youth entrepreneurial ecosystem. The availability of financial, human and physical resources and information enhances the possibilities of recognizing and utilizing opportunities,

*”Entrepreneurship education generates motivation, attitudes and most importantly capabilities for business work. It is important to create entrepreneurial mindset that encourage innovation and recognition of innovative opportunity.”*

which are then turned into businesses by young people. Below follow some examples of opportunity creation actions.

FlyingStart is an initiative developed in the UK by the National Council of Graduate Entrepreneurship. The core is the internet-based entrepreneurship community. It offers students and graduates help to create their own businesses. Graduates who have been up to five years out of university get continuous support via the network. The network consists of more than 10000 members and hundreds of experts. Any time a young entrepreneur needs some advice, he or she can find valuable guidance from accounting, tax, sales, marketing and other experts. Within the community additional help such as business clubs, different events, as well as one-to-one mentoring can be had. (Shooting for the Moon 2009.)

The NGO Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) located in New York, USA, is an international organization that provides entrepreneurship education programmes and initiatives to young people from socially disadvantage backgrounds. It creates entrepreneurial opportunities through a variety of programmes, such as the “Youth Entrepreneurship Programme”, that offers business trips, fair visits and classes on entrepreneurship. “BizCamp” offers intensive six-week trainings, during which students have a possibility to engage with successful business people. The “Business Incubator Programme” offers mentorship by experienced business people to those who want to start their own business. These programmes also involve entrepreneurial actions by the students, for example, business idea competitions. The key emphasis of NFTE is on an interactive approach, instead of teaching theory in the classroom; students get out to the real work and get to interact with successful business people. This way young people get a better understanding of the business challenges, get more encouraged and see the opportunities that exist. (NFTE 2013.)

Entrepreneurship education generates motivation, attitudes and most importantly capabilities for business work. It is important to create an entrepreneurial mind-set that encourages innovation and recognition of innovative opportunity. There are many projects going on with the aim to introduce entrepreneurship education into different levels of schooling, or to create tailor-made training for educating young people. The main challenge remains in the methodology of entrepreneurship education. Camp Je in Québec (Réseau des SADC du Québec, Canada) seems to differ from similar business camps, as it offers to learn and experience business activities in a fun, vacation-like atmosphere. In the camp students go through all the stages of business development, from business idea to applying for a loan, as well as creating and selling the product. The camp combines hard work with social activities and sports and even gives the opportunity to present created business products to real customers on different fairs or events. (Réseau des SADC du Québec 2013.)



Start-up support is actual hands-on help and practical guidance for the establishment of new enterprises. The main aim is to make assistance easily available to young people and the programmes should be inviting. Additionally, facilities for business incubation are needed and access to financing should be facilitated.

ENTERPRISE is an initiative run in the federal-state of Brandenburg in Germany and it is an example of social entrepreneurship. It is a project that managed to support over 300 new businesses by young people. While the funding of the project is very limited, it engages in partnerships with national and regional authorities, education institutions and private business partners. The main activities of ENTERPRISE are grouped into the categories: start-up support, business incubation and networking. Both one-to-one and group counselling and coaching activities are deployed. (Enterprise 2013.)

One of the most successful start-up funding programmes is offered by Youth Strategy that was founded by the Réseau des SADC du Québec, a network of non-profit organisations that works at bringing out the best in Québec's regions and ensuring each region's development support within their business project. A personal loan (CAD 5000 - 15000) without interest for two years gives equity to the young entrepreneur to persuade the bank to complete the financial plan. The young entrepreneur who receives the loan agrees that his or her project is then monitored during the loan period. Since 1997, there have been 5700 young entrepreneurs thus financed. (Shooting for the Moon 2009, 58.)

# **3 Existing Entrepreneurship Support within Barents Region**



In the following chapters some already existing support structures are listed. Each of the Barents Region countries has their own structures, each with a different focus. To better develop and integrate different support practices in the Barents Region countries, it is important to know what is already on offer. This chapter gives the reader an idea where to look for help, and it is hoped that young entrepreneurs will benefit from this type of structured compilation of information.

### 3.1 EXISTING SUPPORT IN NORWAY

In Norway there are both private and public organizations that provide business support. Most of the public and private organizations have offices around the country. The Association of Innovation Companies in Norway is a private business support structure. They have two offices in Norway, one in Oslo and the other in Grålum. The goal of the Association of Innovation Companies in Norway, also known as FIN, is to work for increased public investment in innovation by improving the conditions for innovation and start-up companies. Their main tasks are to promote innovation through company activity for the industry, funding agencies and the media. FIN also provides consultation and networking possibilities. FIN is trying to improve programs and financing for business development through the establishment of strong regional innovation environments, industrial clusters and industrial hubs. (FIN 2013.)

One of the biggest innovation and business supporters in Norway is the global organization Innovation Norway. It is the Norwegian Government's most important tool for business innovation and development. Innovation Norway provides competence, advisory services, promotional services and network services. Their main focus is on promoting Norwegian enterprises and enhancing the competitiveness of the enterprises. For Innovation Norway it is important to enhance innovation in the industry and businesses, as well as to transform viable business ideas into successful businesses. (Innovation Norway 2013.)

Entrepreneurs working in Norway can also find help with official forms and guidelines both in English and Norwegian. For this purpose the government of Norway created a web portal called Altinn (2013). Altinn helps with public reporting forms that are needed to satisfy the official need of information. All the necessary forms and guidelines on how to fill them out can be found on the website. They also make it possible to turn in tax-returns electronically. The Brønnøysund Register Centre is an administrative body responsible for national control and registration schemes for business. Its main aim is to contribute to increased financial security both for business and for society in general. You can register various enterprises and associations here.

The Norwegian Tax Administration has information for enterprises on tax, VAT and employers' contributions. The Norwegian Tax Administration has its own web site, [Taxnorway.no](http://Taxnorway.no), which deals with tax and working in Norway for foreign employees, employers, economic operators and Norwegian employers with foreign employees.

The main task of the Norwegian Industrial Property Office is to process applications for patents, trademarks and registered designs. The Norwegian Industrial Property Office databases contain publicly accessible details of Norwegian applications and rights in design, patent and trade mark registers. Regelhjelp.no is intended to make it easier for businesses to find their way among the regulations in various areas: working environment, fire and explosion protection, electrical safety, pollution control, industrial protection, internal control, food safety, environmental health, plant health, catering, products and consumer services. (Business Support 2013.)

**Table 1. Existing entrepreneur support organizations in Norway**

ORGANIZATION	ABOUT	CONTACT
The Association of Innovation Companies in Norway (FIN)	Coordinates and creates contact networks between educational institutions and research centres to manage the use of scientific knowledge in new companies.	Homepage: <a href="http://fin.abelia.no">fin.abelia.no</a> Phone: +47 905 99 496 E-mail: <a href="mailto:bjorn.horten@borginnovasjon.no">bjorn.horten@borginnovasjon.no</a>  Phone: +47 404 71 869 E-mail: <a href="mailto:daniel.ras-vidal@abelia.no">daniel.ras-vidal@abelia.no</a>
Innovation Norway	Network with whom they cooperate in start-up training and programmes aimed at business founders and small and medium-sized enterprises.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.innovasjon norge.no">www.innovasjon norge.no</a> Phone: +47 22 00 25 00 E-mail: <a href="mailto:post@innovasjon norge.no">post@innovasjon norge.no</a>  Address: Pb. 448 Sentrum, Akersgata 13, 0104, Oslo
Altinn	Provides help with public reporting forms in order to satisfy the authorities' need of information and also help with launching a business.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.altinn.no/en">www.altinn.no/en</a> Phone: +47 75 00 60 00 E-mail: <a href="mailto:support@altinn.no">support@altinn.no</a>
Brønnøysund Register Centre	Administering Altinn: coordinating data in the public sector and providing advisory services are central tasks that make things easier for business and industry.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.brreg.no">www.brreg.no</a> Phone: +47 75 00 75 00 E-mail: <a href="mailto:firmapost@brreg.no">firmapost@brreg.no</a>

ORGANIZATION	ABOUT	CONTACT
The Norwegian Tax Administration	Find information for enterprises on tax, VAT and employers' contributions. The web site deals with tax and working in Norway for foreign employees, employers and economic operators, and Norwegian employers with foreign employees.	Homepage: www.skatteetaten.no  Phone: +47 22 07 70 00
Norwegian Industrial Property Office	Processing applications for patent protection, and for trademark and design registration. They offer courses, seminars and lectures on the importance of industrial property rights.	Homepage: www.patentstyret.no  Phone: +47 22 38 73 00  E-mail: mail@patentstyret.no
Regelhjelp.no	The website makes it easier for users to find out about requirements related to health, safety and the environment that government authorities have established for their industry.	Homepage: www.regelhjelp.no/no/Engelsk/ English  E-mail: kontakt@regelhjelp.no
Youth Entrepreneurship Norway	Youth entrepreneurship promotion activities at national level.	Homepage: www.ue.no  E-mail: ue@ue.no
Norwegian Barents Secretariat	Funding support for Russia-Norway cooperation projects.	Homepage: www.barents.no  E-mail: info@barents.no

### 3.2 EXISTING SUPPORT IN SWEDEN

Coompanion provides advice and guidance for people who want to start a business together, or who already have a business and who want to cooperate with other businesses. They have 25 offices all over Sweden offering free services such as analysing markets, improve business ideas, help find funding and companies to cooperate with, as well as training and help with growing a company. In addition to the free services, Coompanion offers help in the local development of the business, help with networking and workshops for young and aspiring entrepreneurs. (Coompanion 2013.)

The New Business Centre (NyföretagarCentrum) offers personalized and confidential advice prior to the start-up of a business. You can use it as a sounding board to discuss business ideas with experienced experts and, among other things, receive help establishing a business plan. The professional advisers of the agencies are experienced either former or existing entrepreneurs. They will help new ventures by assessing the business idea, budget plans, investment needs, etc. After the assessment they help with connecting with the right networks and enterprises. (Enterprise Agencies 2013.)

IFS Rådgivning (IFS advice) helps immigrants to start up and develop businesses in Sweden. Through the linguistic and cultural competencies of their advisers, IFS can help immigrants understand Swedish laws and regulations. (IFS Rådgivning 2013.) The state-owned ALMI Företagspartner AB offers company development and financing. It provides information and advice, as well as entrepreneurship courses. The Swedish Trade Council offers free services, including information and advice on matters concerning new markets and doing business between Swedish and foreign companies.

The Swedish Companies Registration Office is in charge of registering companies and associations. Information can be obtained here about the various types of company forms, how to register your company and how to protect its name. The Swedish National Tax Board provides information on corporate taxation and reporting obligations. Companies apply to the Tax Board to register for corporation tax, value-added tax (VAT) and employer's contributions. Companies that plan to start up or expand their business operations in Sweden can get free information and help from the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA). (Business Support 2013.)

**Table 2. Existing entrepreneur support organizations in Sweden**

ORGANIZATION	ABOUT	CONTACT
Coompanion	Advice and guidance for people who want to start a business together, or who already have a business and who want to cooperate with other businesses.	Homepage: <a href="http://coompanion.se">coompanion.se</a> Phone: +46 8 515 166 62 E-mail: <a href="mailto: sverige@coompanion.se"> sverige@coompanion.se</a>
New Business Centre 'NyföretagarCentrum'	Personalized and confidential advice prior to the start-up of a business. You can use it as a sounding board to discuss business ideas with experienced experts and among other things receive help establishing a business plan.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.nyforetagarcentrum.com">www.nyforetagarcentrum.com</a> Phone: + 46 8 14 44 00 E-mail: <a href="mailto: mail@nyforetagarcentrum.se"> mail@nyforetagarcentrum.se</a>
IFS Rådgivning (IFS Advice)	IFS's purpose is to stimulate and increase entrepreneurship among migrant groups, raise competence among individual migrant entrepreneurs and work to improve the climate with regards to migrant entrepreneurship.	Homepage: <a href="http://ifs.a.se">ifs.a.se</a> Phone: +46 8-693 99 42 E-mail: <a href="mailto: maroun@ifs.a.se"> maroun@ifs.a.se</a>
ALMI Företagspartner AB	Company development and financing. It provides information and advice as well as entrepreneurship courses.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.almi.se">www.almi.se</a> Phone: +46 771 55 85 00 E-mail: <a href="mailto: info.lanadm@almi.se"> info.lanadm@almi.se</a>
The Swedish Trade Council	Free services including information and advice on matters concerning new markets and doing business between Swedish and foreign companies.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.business-sweden.se/en">www.business-sweden.se/en</a>
The Swedish Companies Registration Office	Office in charge of registering companies and associations. Information can be obtained here about the various types of company forms, how to register your company and how to protect its name.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.bolagsverket.se">www.bolagsverket.se</a> Phone: +46 771 670 670 E-mail: <a href="mailto: bolagsverket@bolagsverket.se"> bolagsverket@bolagsverket.se</a>
Swedish National Tax Board	Information on corporate taxation and reporting obligations. Companies apply to the Tax Board to register for corporation tax (corporate tax card), value-added tax (VAT) and employer's contributions.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.skatteverket.se">www.skatteverket.se</a> Phone: +46 771 567 567

### 3.3 EXISTING SUPPORT IN RUSSIA, MURMANSK AREA

The Entrepreneurship Support Center of the Murmansk Region offers three sectors of help: Financial and law, marketing and information, patenting and licensing. The center operates in the Murmansk area and the services are not free. The office helps with everything from legal paperwork and accounting to making marketing plans and doing marketing campaigns. This support center is a state organization that focuses on increasing the number of SME's in the region, so as to improve the quality of life. (Entrepreneurship Support Center of Murmansk Region 2013.)

The Support Agency for Small and Medium Business is a consulting agency for small and medium-sized businesses. The agency offers help with business planning, projects, seminars and trainings, marketing research, development and implementation, legal services and help with internationalization. The agency has a strong network and support from Murmansk city and other leading consulting organizations. (Support Agency for Small and Medium Business 2013.)

The Murmansk Regional Innovation Business Incubator provides new entrepreneurs with workspaces and meeting rooms. They also offer services like assistance with obtaining loans, help with marketing, seminars and conferences, advisory services and assistance in legal matters. Entrepreneurs can apply for a resident status in the Incubator to be able to use the facilities, computers and services. Residents will then make a contract with the Incubator and will have access not only to the services, but also to trade shows and special business events. Resident spots are limited, but definitely worth the while, because getting a residency also means getting a great network and promotion opportunities. (Murmansk Regional Innovation Business Incubator 2013.)

**Table 3. Existing entrepreneur support organizations in Russia**

ORGANIZATION	ABOUT	CONTACT
Entrepreneurship Support Center of the Murmansk region  (Центр поддержки предпринимательства Мурманской области)	Offers three sectors of help: Financial and law, marketing and information, patenting and licensing. The office helps with everything from legal paperwork and accounting to making marketing plans and doing marketing campaigns.	Homepage: <a href="http://cppmo.ru/index.html">http://cppmo.ru/index.html</a>  Phone: +7 8152 41 0733  E-mail: <a href="mailto:cppmo@rambler.ru">cppmo@rambler.ru</a>
Support Agency for Small and Medium Business  (АГЕНТСТВО ПОДДЕРЖКИ МАЛОГО И СРЕДНЕГО БИЗНЕСА)	A consulting agency for small and medium-sized businesses: The agency offers help with business planning: projects: seminars and trainings: marketing research: development and implementation: legal services and help with internationalization:	Homepage: <a href="http://murbiz.ru">murbiz.ru</a>  Phone: +7 8152 24 4444  E-mail: <a href="mailto:office@murbiz.ru">office@murbiz.ru</a>

ORGANIZATION	ABOUT	CONTACT
<p>Murmansk Regional Innovation Business Incubator</p> <p>(Мурманский региональный инновационный бизнес-инкубатор)</p>	<p>Provides working space: help with legal matters: marketing: conferences: advisory and other services for small and medium sized businesses:</p>	<p>Homepage: <a href="http://gou-mribi.ru">gou-mribi.ru</a></p> <p>Phone: +7 8155 56 1235</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:gou-mribi@yandex.ru">gou-mribi@yandex.ru</a></p>
<p>Northern Chamber of Commerce and Industry</p> <p>(СЕВЕРНАЯ ТОРГОВО-ПРОМЫШЛЕННАЯ ПАЛАТА)</p>	<p>Consulting, legal services, help with patenting</p>	<p>Homepage: <a href="http://www.ncci.ru">www.ncci.ru</a></p> <p>Phone: +7 8152 55 4723</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:ncci@ncci.ru">ncci@ncci.ru</a></p>
<p>Technopark Apatiti</p> <p>(Технопарк – Апатиты)</p>	<p>Help with start-up and development of business, help with patenting, training, seminars, help with innovation.</p>	<p>Phone: +7 8155 57 9326</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:kotvipon@mail.ru">kotvipon@mail.ru</a></p>
<p>Non-commercial organization "Fund for development of small and medium entrepreneurship in the Murmansk region"</p> <p>(Фонд развития малого и среднего предпринимательства Мурманской области - ФОРМАП)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Microfinancing</li> <li>- Providing guarantees of payment for bank lending</li> <li>- Subsidy assistance</li> </ul>	<p>Homepage: <a href="http://formap.ru">formap.ru</a></p> <p>Phone: +7 8152 41 0733</p> <p>Fax: +7 8152 41 0795</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:formap@list.ru">formap@list.ru</a> / <a href="mailto:nkoformap@yandex.ru">nkoformap@yandex.ru</a></p>
<p>Murmansk branch of Russian public organization of small and medium entrepreneurship "Opора Rossii"</p> <p>(Мурманское отделение общероссийской общественной организации малого и среднего предпринимательства «Опора России»)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Business seminars</li> <li>- Trainings</li> </ul>	<p>Homepage: <a href="http://opora51.ru">opora51.ru</a></p> <p>Phone: +7 8152 45 0739</p> <p>Fax: +7 8152 45 0735</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:opora51@mail.ru">opora51@mail.ru</a></p>
<p>Regional Association of Employers' "Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of the Murmansk region"</p> <p>(Региональное объединение работодателей «Союз промышленников и предпринимателей Мурманской области»)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seminars, trainings</li> <li>- Annual conferences</li> <li>- Exhibitions</li> <li>- International activities</li> <li>- Participation in competitions</li> </ul>	<p>Homepage: <a href="http://www.sppmo.ru">www.sppmo.ru</a></p> <p>Phone: +7 8152 55 1102</p> <p>Fax: +7 8152 55 1103</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@sppmo.ru">info@sppmo.ru</a></p>

### 3.4 EXISTING SUPPORT IN FINLAND

There are different kinds of support out there. No matter where you live in Finland, every region will have some kind of support available for entrepreneurs. Different authorities or companies provide business services, start-up and development funding, as well as services for developing one's innovations. Different support organizations for new entrepreneurs already exist. The newest form of support is the Living Labs. These are usually connected to already existing organizations such as universities and businesses. Their main objective is to create a platform for open innovation. The support available for start-ups is mostly regional, so the size depends on the region where the support is provided. The existing support structures can be broken down into three main categories: business services, business funding and innovation services. These services are provided by governmental authorities, as well as other, more private, organizations supporting the early stages of a business. (ELY 2013.)

The main provider of business services in Finland is the governmental organization Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, ELY Centres. The organization has offices all over Finland, so they are quite accessible. The business services they provide are advisory, training and expert services. The focus of the ELY Centres is to develop the region they operate in. Also the Chambers of Commerce operate with regional development in mind. Overall the Finnish Chambers of Commerce promote the business environment and competitive position of Finnish companies both in Finland and in the European Community. (ELY 2013; Holopainen 2009, 151.)

There are also enterprise agencies, such as the Finnish Enterprise Agencies (Uusyrittyskeskus Ry), EnterpriseHelsinki (YrittysHelsinki) and Rovaniemi Development Agency (Rovaniemen Kehitys Oy). The three mentioned organizations offer a wide range of professional business advice. The offered advice ranges anywhere from idea development to marketing advice to funding advice. (Uusyrittyskeskus Ry 2013; YrittysHelsinki 2013; Rovaniemen Kehitys Oy 2013.)

**Table 4. Existing entrepreneur support organizations in Finland**

ORGANIZATION	ABOUT	CONTACT
ELY Centers	These centres offer business advice, start-up financing and development services for enterprises.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.ely-keskus.fi">www.ely-keskus.fi</a> Lapland Office Phone: + 358 295 037 000



ORGANIZATION	ABOUT	CONTACT
Rovaniemi Regional Development Agency (Rovaniemen Kehitys Oy)	Advisory services in setting up a company, investment opportunities, corporate partners, market analysis, financing alternatives.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.rovaniemenkehitys.fi">www.rovaniemenkehitys.fi</a> Phone: +358 400 187250 E-mail: <a href="mailto:eija.jussila-salmi@rovaniemi.fi">eija.jussila-salmi@rovaniemi.fi</a>
Finnish Enterprise Agencies (Uusyrittyskeskus Ry)	Business advisory organization. Offers help with business idea, start-up financing, marketing etc.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.uusyrittyskeskus.fi">www.uusyrittyskeskus.fi</a> Phone: +358 500 285 902 E-mail: <a href="mailto:heikki.pietarinen@uusyrittyskeskus.fi">heikki.pietarinen@uusyrittyskeskus.fi</a>
Finnvera	Financing enterprises with loans, investments etc. during start-up, growth and development phases.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.finnvera.fi">www.finnvera.fi</a> Phone: +358 29 460 2580 E-mail: <a href="mailto:ulla.hagman@finnvera.fi">ulla.hagman@finnvera.fi</a>
Finpro	Internationalization and investment development organization.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.finpro.fi">www.finpro.fi</a> Phone: +358 204 6951 E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@finpro.fi">info@finpro.fi</a>
Tekes	The Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.tekes.fi">www.tekes.fi</a> Phone: +358 29 50 55051
Chamber of Commerce	Promotes business environment and the competitive position of Finnish companies.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.kauppakamari.fi">www.kauppakamari.fi</a> Phone: +358 9 4242 6200 E-mail: <a href="mailto:keskuskauppakamari@chamber.fi">keskuskauppakamari@chamber.fi</a>
Lapland Chamber of Commerce	Facilitates international trade and establishes contacts between companies in Lapland and other companies, especially in the Barents Euroarctic Region.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.lapland.chamber.fi">www.lapland.chamber.fi</a> Phone: +358 20 754 5498 E-mail: <a href="mailto:taija.jurmu@chamber.fi">taija.jurmu@chamber.fi</a>
Enterprise Finland	Information on how to establish and do business in Finland.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.enterprisefinland.fi">www.enterprisefinland.fi</a> E-mail: <a href="mailto:palaute@yrittysuomi.fi">palaute@yrittysuomi.fi</a>
The Regional Organization of Enterprises in Lapland	Information, networking and research support.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.yrittajat.fi/lappi">www.yrittajat.fi/lappi</a> Phone: +358 400 984077 E-mail: <a href="mailto:toimisto@lapin.yrittajat.fi">toimisto@lapin.yrittajat.fi</a>
Kemi-Tornio Region Entrepreneurship Services (Kemi-Tornion Alueyrittyspalvelut)	Start-up support, incubator, education and training.	Homepage: <a href="http://www.kemitornioyppalvelu.fi">www.kemitornioyppalvelu.fi</a> Phone: +358 40 768 5438 E-mail/Start-ups: <a href="mailto:kimmo.nurmos@kemi-tornio.fi">kimmo.nurmos@kemi-tornio.fi</a>

# 4 Conclusion

This study regarding various practices and initiatives of entrepreneurship promotion and support was carried out within the ENPI Kolarctic project “Young Innovative Entrepreneurs”. There are many varying forms of support for entrepreneurship existing in all countries participating in the project. However, for an entrepreneur operating in the area it is often very challenging to identify the most suitable existing support organization. Therefore, the study intended to collect relevant information which would help both entrepreneurship support stakeholders and acting young entrepreneurs to orientate themselves better in the labyrinths of existing support across the Barents Region.

The particular interest of this study was to learn what support measures are specific for the entrepreneurship initiated by young people, i.e. youth entrepreneurship. During the study it became evident that there are many various entrepreneurship support initiatives implemented, while there are few entrepreneurship interventions targeting young people in particular. Youth entrepreneurship promotion requires more specific measures, since there are particular challenges facing youth entrepreneurship. Not too many measures or programmes at EU or national level address in particular these challenges of youth entrepreneurship and in the majority of existing programmes young people starting a business are treated as a part of the adult population at large.

At the EU level there are several beneficial programmes promoting youth entrepreneurship, such as the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs and European Social Fund programmes and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument support project initiatives targeting youth entrepreneurship.

The study of good practices targeting youth entrepreneurship promotion all over the world suggests that there is a need to create policies and measures tailored to the local needs of youth entrepreneurship and to create a local entrepreneurship ecosystem. Various examples of good practices encourage the search for innovative methods in supporting youth entrepreneurship. There is not one specific model applicable, therefore various activities in different innovative forms can greatly facilitate youth entrepreneurship. Examples are intensive camps for start-ups, networking events between young and experienced business people, activities aiming to create an entrepreneurial and innovative mind-set in a fun, vacation like atmosphere where hard working is combined with social activities. Other examples include the development of wide networks of young business people and experts, by using online social media tools, specific microfinancing programmes and engaging educational events.

A summarised list of existing support initiatives for entrepreneurs in the Barents Region (Finland, Sweden, Norway, Russia) shows that there are a lot of support possibilities available. Young and aspiring entrepreneurs need to be better informed and consulted about these existing support opportunities. The list of support institutions providing help to entrepreneurs in different ways offers brief descriptions and contact information and should help young entrepreneurs to find appropriate support for the development of their business more easily.

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Young people of the Barents Region should be considered as a golden reserve of human capital of the northern area. They will shape the future of the region. Supporting youth entrepreneurship should become a priority in regional development.

This study was carried out within the ENPI Kolarctic-funded project Young Innovative Entrepreneurs (YIE). The YIE project intends to give an impulse to the promotion of youth entrepreneurship in the Barents Region. The programme is run by partners from the Northern parts of the four participating countries: Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia.

This study seeks to identify and describe various practices and initiatives of entrepreneurship promotion and support. Special attention is paid to the promotion of youth entrepreneurship, the use of practices and existing structures of support in the development of youth entrepreneurship in the Barents Region.



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