



**Presentation to
Best Agers Mid Term Conference
St. Petersburg, Russia**

**9 June 2011
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Project Director**





A COMMUNITY OF SHARED INTEREST

Partners

Mid-East Regional Authority, Ireland (Lead Partner)

The PRIME Initiative, UK

Inno TSD, France

Observers

City of Bonn, North Rhine Westphalia, Germany

Conseil Général des Côtes d'Armor, Brittany France

County Enterprise Boards in Kildare, Meath and Wicklow, Ireland

Dublin City University, Ireland (Link to Professor of Entrepreneurship)

Ministry for Intergenerational Affairs, Family, Women and Integration, North Rhine Westphalia, Germany

Perspective 45, Luxembourg

Provincial Government of Gelderland, Netherlands

PRIME Cymru, Wales



THE STARTING POINT

- ❖ Growth challenge facing Europe
- ❖ Europe is not particularly entrepreneurial
- ❖ Few of the new businesses started achieve subsequent growth
- ❖ Shortage of informal investment - the lifeblood of new and growing enterprises

THE OLDER AGE GROUPS

- ❖ Healthier with longer life expectations
- ❖ Well resourced and well positioned
- ❖ Novel approach is needed to encourage their greater engagement with enterprise
- ❖ Varying risk options is needed to suit individual preferences
- ❖ Encouragement to “follow a dream”

The means by which those in the older groups will engage with enterprise as part of this ambitious pilot programme is:

- ❖ Through **starting and partnering**
- ❖ Through **investing and acquiring**
- ❖ Through **advising and supporting innovation in new and existing businesses**

Senior Ambassadors and Role Models will assist in reinforcing the message

Senior Enterprise is also focused on:

- ❖ Raising awareness of the many ways in which older people can engage with enterprise
- ❖ Identifying and influencing the removal of barriers to engagement
- ❖ Establishing a **Senior Enterprise Association**, a local, national and transnational network for those interested in such engagement
- ❖ Influencing policymakers to view older people through engagement with enterprise as a resource



Approved for support by the EU through **INTERREG IVB NWE**, a financial instrument of the EU's Cohesion Policy

INTERREG IVB NWE:

- ❖ Funds projects which support transnational cooperation
- ❖ Its aim is to find innovative ways to make the most of territorial assets and tackle shared problems of Member States, regions and other authorities, including those that are posed by demographic change.





Specifically designed to address the concerns of the European Union with regard to:

- ❖ The challenges posed by an ageing population
- ❖ The need to increase productivity, competitiveness and entrepreneurial activity across the EU





It is intended as a result of **SENIOR ENTERPRISE** that:

- ❖ More businesses will have been started
- ❖ More investment will have been made
- ❖ More older citizens will be active as advisors in new and developing businesses



HIGHLY INNOVATIVE

- ❖ Turns the disadvantages often associated with the over 50's and demographic change into a positive driver of entrepreneurship and growth
- ❖ Such a comprehensive approach has not been delivered previously
- ❖ Model will be tested and rolled out to wider NWE and beyond



- ❖ Community of shared interest identified
- ❖ Initiative formally launched October 2010
- ❖ Initial focus on Raising Awareness and on Starting and Partnering (WPs 1 and 2)
- ❖ Continuing to develop
- ❖ Website – www.seniorenterprise.ie



RAISING AWARENESS

Strategy:

- ❖ Development of Role Models
- ❖ Media campaign
- ❖ Maximising networking possibilities
- ❖ Creating ambassadors
- ❖ Maximising opportunities presented by conferences and other events
- ❖ Direct contact

ROLE MODELS



STARTING AND PARTNERING

50+ Start Your Own Business (SYOB)

- ❖ Transnational cooperation in design
- ❖ Piloted by Enterprise Boards in Mid East Region (Sept – Nov 2010)
- ❖ Three courses run simultaneously
- ❖ Subsequent formal review

50+ SYOB – A SUCCESS?

- ❖ High overall satisfaction rating by participants
- ❖ Clear merit of having an age specific 50+SYOB course
- ❖ Strong commitment by participants
- ❖ Good dynamic and collaboration
- ❖ Too early to judge the number of sustainable new businesses that will emerge

THE WICKLOW 50+ SYOB SUPPORT GROUP

- ❖ Set up January 2011
- ❖ Agreed to meet Jan to June 2011 as a support for each other without external support
- ❖ Meetings Format, Structure & Agenda agreed
- ❖ Series of presentations organised for monthly meetings e.g. franchising, business planning, drawing on the knowledge within the group, or from their contacts
- ❖ Reviewed after 6 months, very positive feedback
- ❖ Agreed to meet for further six months



EXPERIENCE OF ONE SELF-SUSTAINING GROUP

- ❖ Higher tenacity and start-up rate among participants than is the general experience with a SYOB course
- ❖ In some instances, gave participants space and time to rethink original idea with peer support

“It allowed me to share my problems in a trusting environment”

“Going to the meetings reminded me what I have to do”

“The maturity, openness and trust in the Support Group sets it apart”

“My business would not be where it is now except for these meetings”

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

- ❖ Further 50+ SYOB courses to be run in counties in Mid-East and other Regions in Ireland, in Brittany and then reviewed
- ❖ Role model profiles to be developed for advisers/supporters and call for volunteers launched
- ❖ Best practise training for Senior Enterprise volunteers
- ❖ Senior Enterprise Association to be launched as linking mechanism for starters and supporters

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Similar approach will be adopted for acquirers and investors

- ❖ Role models developed
- ❖ Initiative launched
- ❖ Best practise training provided
- ❖ Formal review to capture the learning
- ❖ Further roll out and cycle repeated
- ❖ All characterised by constant learning, improvement and translational cooperation



- ❖ Happy to share our learning
- ❖ The initiative is eminently transferable
- ❖ Senior Enterprise Association provides linking mechanism within regions, countries and between countries

www.seniorenterprise.ie

