



## **ENTER to Transform Kick-off meeting**

### A new approach to support RR-restarters

**Gelsenkirchen, October 12, 2020.** With the kick-off meeting (12<sup>th</sup> October 2020) the project “Enter to transform” officially started. The project’s goal is to help the partner countries achieve sustainable growth and innovation by increasing refugee entrepreneurship (RR). The transnational project consortium is led by the University of Twente (NL). It consists of a mix of partners from the four countries France, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands and engages in research and development as well as implementation.

The project helps raising the numbers of the target group of recognized refugees re-starting businesses in North-West Europe (NWE). While some of them may wish to start their own business again, they encounter various difficulties (bureaucracy, complex responsibilities, language barrier) in the existing business support structure. Here the project comes in and supports to overcome these barriers, while offering an approach based on a social innovation.

The project develops a supportive environment of hubs including mentoring services and functioning as “door openers” for RR re-starters to enter existing entrepreneurial infrastructure in the regions. In doing so, the project avoids parallel structures, instead introducing RRs to how, by whom and where to get the tools they need to restart in the regions. The RR re-starters in NWE will be supported along the business phases stand-up, start-up and scaling. The project focuses on four sectors: health (especially care), crafts (especially manufacturing), ICT services, trade (sales representatives) as these sectors reported recruitment bottlenecks.

The hubs function as physical and virtual meeting place. Different to other approaches, the project supports the RR restarters through a co-creative involvement and an opportunity-driven focus on entrepreneurship.

In the first step, the project was rolled out in the participating NWE regions. As a next step, the mentoring approach will be developed transnationally. As a consequence,

the first pilot hub will be implemented in France. The implementation of further hubs follows. The hub implementation is based on an evaluation of existing projects and best practices shared by the project partners.

The project Enter to Transform is funded by the Interreg North-West Europe. For further information please visit the project's [website](#).

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