

ENGAGING ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS FOR THE YOUTH

Action Plan for Joint Classes

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About this report

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1 Objective

The "Joint Classes" are organised by the Ecosys4you project partnership (www.ecosys4you.eu) to establish connections between the Entrepreneurial Ecosystems in the Ruhr, in Varna and in Slovenia. Ecosys4you has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101100432.

This Action Plan describes the process of development of various formats of Joint Classes, named "Entrepreneurial Mind in Action" (one course with three modules) for participants (students, pupils, alumni) of the three entrepreneurship ecosystems: Ruhr in Germany, Varna in Bulgaria and Slovenia. Knowledge transfer will happen in an entirely online (virtual) learning environment hosted by DOBA Business School (BlackBoard Ultra). Participants will work in international, multicultural teams on challenges for the real-life sector (start-ups ecosystem). The objective is to develop classes that foster an entrepreneurial mindset in participants with the potential to become entrepreneurs in the near future and to educate/train teachers and e-tutors to run these classes. Private sector expertise, especially from the start-ups (and scale-ups) from all three regions, will be essential for the success of the joint classes. Entrepreneurs will contribute as guests and give talks, for example, regarding their ventures' history, how to acquire funding in different stages of growth, and how to get from an idea to an opportunity on the market. They will coach the participants in developing solutions with the help of different tools/methods of fostering creativity and innovativeness. When developing the content of the joint classes, the specific needs of female entrepreneurs will be taken into account.

The Joint Classes piloting will take place twice. The first pilot will start in December 2024 after 6 months of preparation (implementation strategy & design and development) with recruiting teachers/ e-tutors, while the piloting itself with participants will start in March 2025 and continue until May 2025. The second pilot will start in October of 2025, after evaluations of the first pilot and changes to the course (syllabus, implementation plan, contents, materials, and assessment methods) according to the results of the evaluation of the first pilot.

Benefits for participants/students:

- No costs of travel or accommodation: Joint Classes will be delivered entirely online (virtual learning environment).
- Contents adjusted to the needs/ specifics of all 3 ecosystems
- Skill enhancement: Participants develop essential entrepreneurial skills such as how to set up a business, start a business, and scale up a business (business planning, innovative business modelling, design thinking, getting to the market, financial management, funding, and more).
- Private sector expertise: Participants will learn from experienced founders who will share their entrepreneurial stories (success and failure).
- Participants develop soft skills needed for the development of their entrepreneurial careers by working/ collaborating in international/ intercultural teams, developing language skills, developing leadership skills, time management skills, and developing a network for potential future collaboration.
- Hands-on projects: Participants apply their newly gained knowledge on real-life challenges and are inspired to think creatively and in innovative ways.
- Pitching sessions: Participants will develop their presentation skills by presenting/pitching their ideas, prototypes and business models.
- Programme/ Joint Classes certificate: Participants' competencies are recognised and certified—each successfully completed module earns them 3 ECTS (a a total of 9 ECTS).
- Tool-book for participants/ students

Benefits for participants/teachers/ e-tutors:

- No costs of travel or accommodation: "Joint Classes" will be delivered entirely online (virtual learning environment) saving time.
- Train the trainers programme contributing to the development of their skills to work in an entirely online environment (guidelines for teachers).
- Working in an international network of project partners network development and opportunities for future collaboration.
- Developing language skills and intercultural skills.
- Access to OERs and other materials developed in the project.



Figure 1: VLE and linking different entrepreneurial ecosystems and expertise

The following section first describes the activities involved in organising the cross-ecosystem internship programme (months 1-6), then the activities during the internship period (months 7-9) and finally the evaluation activities (months 10-12). The action plan uses explanatory examples and graphics from the first batch.

2 Organization before the first pilot of "Joint Classes" (9 months)

Clarify time frame: in the period from May 2024 until the end of January 2025 (9 months), the activities of preparing the first version of the Course "Entrepreneurial Mind in Action" and its three modules: Entrepreneurship basics, Starting the business, Scale-up your business will be completed.

The key elements in the preparation period are: Activities plan (May 2024, one month, WP1), Implementation strategy for Joint Classes, including 3 workshops with stakeholders (D2.1, June to August 2024, 3 months), First concept of Joint classes (D2.2, September – November 2024, 3 months), Course layout (VLE, BBU) (one month, December 2024), selection of teachers/ e-tutors (2 weeks, December 2025), Train the teachers/ e-tutors (one month, January 2025), Evaluations by teachers/ e-tutors (January 2025). Recruit participants (January to February 2025).

In order to recruit the first cohort of participants of the »Joint classes«, a marketing campaign will be carried out in January 2025: it will consist of an Application Process for participants/ students and an Awareness campaign to reach out to participants/students.

To prepare the participants/ students for the pilot course, we will develop a tool kit with information/guidance for them to familiarize themselves with the VLE (BBU), and an introduction/information day will be organized.

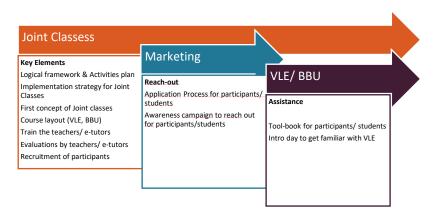


Figure 2: Actions before the first pilot of "Joint Classes"

2.1 Key Elements

2.1.1 Logical framework & Activities plan

The Ecosys4you team of DBS developed a detailed plan of activities based on the Ecosys4you project application related to the objectives and planned deliverables of WP2.

The Logical Framework of WP2—Joint Classes was prepared as a starting point for developing the Activities plan for WP2.

Table 1. Logical framework "Joint Classes" (June 2024 – August 2026)

	Project Summary	Indicators	Measurement dicators	t of I	n-	Measurement Indicators	of	Responsible partner(s)
lmpact	Knowledge transfer and crea-		Feedback	sessio	on			
	tion of knowledge outside of traditional means and in VLE	1 course/ minimum 3 modules	TPM (Varna, I 17)	May 1	6-			
	High-impact learning based on integration of real life exam-							
	ples (start-ups and scale- ups)/real life sector and private	nalities (GER, BOLG,						
	sector expertise	SLO) and ecosystems						
		Nr. of participants - to- tal at least 200 (80						
		woman) (100 students						
		per pilot; 40 women)						
		2 cohorts/ 2 pilots of 3 modules						
		1 VLE (BB ultra at						
		DOBA Faculty)						
		4 start-ups						
		1 scientific paper						
		Nr. of international						
		teams of participants:						
		aprox. 20 per cohort						

	Teacher training programme	2x; Adjustment of		
		course after the first pilot)		
	Course package with 3 modules	Course with 3 mo-		
Outputs	Course package with 3 modules	uules	•	Module 3 - Con-
Outputs	The first Concept of "EMA":	Module 1 - content:	Module 2 - content:	tent
		Entrepreneurship in-		
		troduction - Entrepre-	Design thinking: Gen-	
	Module 1: Entrepreneurship		erating and evaluat-	
	basics (setting-up the busi-		_	Business life cyc-
	ness) (3 ECTS)	ries)		les
	Module 2: Starting the business (3 ECTS)	Entrepreneurial com- petences (test)	Design thinking: Prototypes - MVPs	Planning growth
		Organisation and legal	Innovative and sus-	
	Module 3: Scale up your busi-			
	ness (3 ECTS)	tems)	models:	Financing
				Pitching to inves-
		"Accounting" basics	BM canvas	tors (online)
			VPC - Value Proposi-	
		Compliance	tion Canvas	
		Support infrastructure	Presentation techni-	
		(all ecosystems)	ques:	
			Pitching and Pecha	
		Guests and cases	Kucha	
			Guests and cases	
Phase 2: Ei	rst piloting of the course EMA - 3	modules in VI F and ont	-	
Impact	Knowledge transfer and crea-	modules in VLE and Opt	mmation	
iiiipact	tion of knowledge outside of			
	traditional means and in VLE -		Quantitative questio-	
	Pilot 1		nairre (N=200; 2x100)	
	High-impact learning by an op-	•	Qualitative interviews	
	timised confrontational learn-		(N=6)	
	ing environment for students		v : =1	
			Focus group discus-	
			sions (N=5)	
Outcomes	Meaningful optimised environ-	•		
	ment for the TT programme			
	Meaningful optimised course			
	package "EMA"/ 3 modules (3 x			
	3 ECTS)			
Outputs	Optimised "EMA" course package:			
	Module 1: Entrepreneurship			
	basics (setting-up the busi-			
	ness) (3 ECTS)			
	Module 2: Starting the business (3 ECTS)			
	ness to cutst			
		-		
	Module 3: Scale up your business (3 ECTS)			
Activities	Module 3: Scale up your business (3 ECTS)			
Activities	Module 3: Scale up your business (3 ECTS) First piloting and evaluation			
Activities	Module 3: Scale up your business (3 ECTS) First piloting and evaluation (qualitative and quantitative			
Activities	Module 3: Scale up your business (3 ECTS) First piloting and evaluation (qualitative and quantitative surveys, focus group)			
Activities	Module 3: Scale up your business (3 ECTS) First piloting and evaluation (qualitative and quantitative surveys, focus group) First optimising of the 3 mod-			
Activities	Module 3: Scale up your business (3 ECTS) First piloting and evaluation (qualitative and quantitative surveys, focus group) First optimising of the 3 modules of the course			
Activities	Module 3: Scale up your business (3 ECTS) First piloting and evaluation (qualitative and quantitative surveys, focus group) First optimising of the 3 mod-			

Phase 3: Se	cond piloting of the course EMA - 3	modules in VLE and finalisation
Impact	Knowledge transfer and crea-	
	tion of knowledge outside of	Quantitative questi-
	traditional means and in VLE -	onnaire (N=200;
	pilot 2	2x100)
	High-impact learning by a final-	Qualitative interviews
	ised confrontational learning	(N=6)
	environment for students	
		Focus group discus-
		sions (N=5)
Outcomes	, ,	
	course "EMA" / 3 modules	
	Meaningful finalised environ-	
	ment for the TT programme	
Outputs	Optimised "EMA" course pack-	
· .	age:	
	Module 1: Entrepreneurship	
	basics (setting-up the busi-	
	ness) (3 ECTS)	
	Module 2: Starting the busi-	
	ness (3 ECTS)	
	Module 3: Scale up your busi-	
	ness (3 ECTS)	
Activities	Final optimisation course	
, ictivities	"EMA" based on outcomes of	
	the surveys	
	the surveys	

Table 2. Activities plan "Joint Classes" (June 2024 – August 2026)

10	Activity	deadline	responsible partner		
	"Joint classes" activities plan	31.05.2024	DF		
.1.	Final decision on the name of the course and of three modules	17.05.2024	all		
2.	Decision on modules' contents and division of roles by partners	17.05.2024	all		
.3.	Revision of the activities plan with partners	17.05.2024	all		
4.	Final activities plan	31.05.2024	DF		
	Implementation strategy "Joint classes"	30.08.2024	DF		
1.	Development of implementation strategy	15.06.2024	DF		
2.	Revision of the implementation strategy by partners	30.06.2024	all		
3.	Finalization of implementation strategy	15.07.2024	DF		
4.	Submission of the deliverable D.2.1	30.08.2024	DF		
	Developing first concept of joint classes	01. 09. 2024 - 30. 11. 2024	DF+all		
1.	Division of tasks according to implementation strategy	1.09.2024	DF+all		
2.	Development of the first concept of "Joint classes"	30.11.2024	DF+all		
3.	Designing Module 1: Entrepreneurship Basics	1.09.2024 - 30.11.2024	DF		
4.	Designing Module 2: Starting the business	1.09.2024 - 30.11.2024	DF		
5.	Designing Module 3: Scale-up your business	1.09.2024 - 30.11.2024	DF		
6.	Revision of the first concept of the "Joint classes" by all partners	30.10.2024	all		
7.	Finalisation of the first concept of "Joint classes"	15.11.2024	DF		
8.	Submission of the deliverable D.2.2 - first concept of the "Joint classes"	30.11.2024	DF		
	Course layout - preparing 3 modules in VLE / BBU	1.12 20.12.2024	DF		
	Train the teachers/ e-tutors	20.01.2025	DF		
1.	recruit teachers/ e-tutors	1.12.2023 - 10.01.2025	all		
2.	prepare guidelines for teachers/ e-tutors	10.01.2025	DF		
3.	Train the teachers	30.01.2025	DF		
4.	Survey for teachers and analyse feedback and agree on adjustments and updates	30.01.2025	DF+all		
	First pilot with participants - course "EMA" / 3 modules	3.01. 2025 - 30. 05. 2025	all		
1.	Recruitment of the participants (tender/invitation)	03. 01. 2025 - 30. 01. 2025	all		
2.	prepare toolbook for participants	30.01.2025	DF+all		
3.	Conducting the first pilot	01. 03. 2025 - 30. 05. 2025	all		
	Evaluation of the first pilot/ participants/ teachers/ e-tutors	5.06.2025	all		
	Analyse feedback and agree on adjustments and updates	15.06.2025	DF+all		
	Report on the implementation of conducted pilot 1	25-615.07.2025	DF		
1.	Final version of the report and submission of D.2.3	15.07.2025	DF		
).	Optimisation of modules 1,2 3 - produce final version	15.9 30.09.2025	DF+all		
0.1.	update the VLE for the modules 1, 2, 3	30.09.2025	DF		
l.	Second pilot of "EMA" / 3 modules	1.10.2025 - 30.03.2026	DF+all		
1.1.	Recruit the participants	30.10.2025	all		
.2.	Delivery second pilot (same activity as in pilot 1)	01. 11. 2025 - 30. 01. 2026	all		
.3.	Final adjustment after evaluation (all 3 modules + VLE)	30.03.2026			
2.	Complete and well functioning course	5.05.2026	all		

2.1.2 Implementation Strategy for Joint Classes

The implementation strategy will consist of a detailed plan of activities based on the preliminary plan of activities (Table 2).

Implementation of pilot activities of teachers with participants:

- 1. At the level of the course modules (title of module and sessions within each module; individual learning outcomes for participants; activities with participants; assignments for participants, materials)
- 2. At the level of each module's sessions (Los learning objectives, Name of activity, Explanation of activity, Type of activity individual, team, self-paced activity; time needed for activity)

It will be developed between June 1 and August 30, 2024.

Three online workshops with stakeholders (June 12, June 19 and July 3, 2024) in order to guarantee that Joint Classes are synchronised with the needs of all 3 ecosystems.

Joint classes will be developed as **one course (Entrepreneurial Mind in Action) in 3 modules**:

- 1. Module 1: Entrepreneurship Basics
- 2. Module2: Starting a business

3. Module 3: Scale-up your business

All 3 modules will be assigned 3 ECTS each (9 ECTS in total). The length of each module will be 4 weeks.

The course curriculum includes objectives, target group and its needs, ILOs (individual learning outcomes), topics, timeline, materials, assessments, and surveys) will be developed, piloted and evaluated in collaboration with all project partners under the lead of DBS.

DBS, as a WP2 leader, will provide the virtual learning environment (BlackBoard Ultra) to support the 100% online delivery of the course/ modules.

In order to pilot the course optimally, teachers and e-tutors will be trained, and Guidelines for them (How to work in VLE—BBU) will be written.

An **e-Toolbook** for participants on how to study in VLE (BBU) will be prepared.

2.1.3 The first concept of joint classes

According to the activities plan, the first concept of Joint Classes will be developed and revised by all partners (with the lead of DBS) between September 1 and November 30, 2024, - after the Implementation Strategy is developed and confirmed by all the partners (end of August 2024).

Activities to be done in order to develop the first concept of Joint classes are the following (look at Table 2, the first outline of the activities):

- Partners have to agree on the division of tasks and responsibilities in order to prepare the first concept of Joint Classes to correspond to the needs of the target group/s in all 3 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems (Ruhr, Germany, Varna, Bulgaria and Slovenia) (17th May 2024, Varna).
- DBS will develop the first concept of joint classes between September 1st and November 30th, 2024, including all partners according to the division of tasks and continuous collaboration under the supervision of DBS—entirely in English.
- The first concept of Joint classes relates to designing the 3 modules of the Entrepreneurial Mind in Action course: Entrepreneurship Basics, Starting the business and Scale-up your business.
- Teachers have to be selected at partner institutions.
- Within the designing process of all three modules, the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) will be defined; the decision will be made on the final assessment of each module (assignment of 3 ECTS, certificates, micro-credentials to be considered; rubrics); syllabuses of all 3 modules will be developed; the implementation plans for delivery of all 3 modules in an online environment (VLE) will be prepared and will be based on the expected teamwork/ collaboration of participants in international/ multicultural teams; study materials will be prepared (selection of existing freely available resources; OER; own production of micro units such as short videos, short case studies, quizzes, memo games etc.); a survey for teachers/ e-tutors and a survey for participants will be developed (docs on Google drive; QR code and link to access)
- After all 3 modules are developed, the draft version will be revised by all partners, and comments/ suggestions for changes and improvements will be integrated by the WP2 lead partner DBS into a final version of the first concept of Joint Classes.
- The first concept in its final form will be prepared in the format of deliverable D2.2 and submitted by DBS in the system by the end of November 2024.

2.1.4 Course Layout (VLE/BBU)

After the first concept of the course and its 3 modules are finalised, the course/ all 3 modules will have to be put in the VLE. VLE will be provided/ hosted by DBS. DBS uses the Blackboard Ultra VLE. The course will be organised in the VLE according to the standards set/ used by the DBS, and access and support will be granted to all stakeholders involved in the delivery of the course/ 3 modules and to the participants.

Based on the design of the 3 modules, they will be prepared in VLE by the LMS coordinator at DBS in December 2024.

2.1.5 Train the teachers/ e-tutors

When the course/ 3 modules are prepared in the VLE, it is time to introduce the teachers and e-tutors at the partner institutions who will be involved in delivering the modules to the VLE in BBU.

In case the teachers involved in developing the modules' design are not the same as the ones involved in delivering the first pilot of the modules, the recruitment process of teachers/ e-tutors should take place in December 2024.

Although VLE in BBU is user-friendly, it is necessary that **e-guidelines** for teachers are prepared (DBS will prepare the Guidelines – TBP: how to navigate through the course/ modules) and used at the train the teachers'/e-tutors' workshop before the first piloting of the modules.

Train the teachers/e-tutors workshop will be organised and run by DBS (online) in January 2025 as a 2-day event (2 x 3 hours). Teachers and e-tutors will have to register for the workshop (a condition for assigning them access to the VLE). VLE in BBU and course/ modules layout will be introduced and open questions addressed.

Access will be granted to the teachers and e-tutors upon their registration for the workshop for teachers/ e-tutors. User names and passwords will be granted by DBS (IT support).

The course, with its 3 modules, will be piloted between 1 February and 31 May as a joint programme for all participants from partner institutions. Each module will last 4 weeks (max) and, upon successful completion, grant 3 ECTS (certificate, micro-credentials). The language of delivery will be English.

Each module will be run by a teacher from a selected institution from the partnership (upon the agreement; each module has to be otherwise covered by one teacher per partner institution); e-tutors from selected partner institutions will be involved in the piloting of the 3 modules (same rule applies as for teachers). Teachers will deliver introductory and closing webinars (synchronous activities), will host guests from real-life (synchronous activities), will provide information and guidance to e-tutors, will assess assignments and coordinate assessments of assignments in case e-tutors are involved in assessment process, and provide general feedback; e-tutors will monitor collaboration in international teams and provide guidance (after teams are formed in MS Teams environment; synchronous and asynchronous activity), will provide support to participants, communicate in forums (asynchronous activities). E-tutors communicate with teachers on a daily basis.

2.1.6 Evaluation by teachers/ e-tutors

Before the first piloting of Joint Classes, which will start in March 2025, a survey for teachers and etutors will be developed to evaluate their experience with piloting the course/ modules in training the teachers/ e-tutors workshop.

The survey (TBP by DBS) will include demographic data (name and last name of teacher/ e-tutor, institution, country, position in the institution), assessment of delivery format, assessment of the structure

of the course in VLE and its transparency/ ease of use, and content-related data. The survey will be developed on Google Drive, and access will be granted to teachers/ e-tutors participating in the training programme.

DBS will analyse the survey results and share them in partnership to agree upon final adjustments and updates of the course and 3 modules in VLE (BBU).

The activities related to evaluation before the first pilot of the course/ 3 modules will take place in January 2025.

2.1.7 Recruitment of participants

A recruitment marketing campaign to reach participants will be prepared by DBS and discussed within the partnership.

Target group/s have to be finally defined first (students, high school pupils, alumni).

DBS (TBP; November 2024) will prepare the brochure in English and share it within the partnership to attract participants from the identified target groups.

In January 2025, all partner institutions will publish an invitation/tender to invite participants to the course/ 3 modules' first pilot, which will take place between **March and May 2025**.

Upon application, participants will have to register for the programme (centralised registration for one, two, or all three modules) and attend a compulsory introductory/info day organised by DBS to familiarise themselves with the VLE in BBU. The information/introductory day will be organised online in February 2025 (before the first pilot) and will take four hours.

Before the information/ introductory day, the registered participants will receive an e-toolbook with guidelines for navigating the course and 3 modules in the VLE (BBU). DBS (TBP) will prepare the e-toolbook. They will be granted access to the VLE (user name and password).

As defined in the project application, at least 100 participants have to be involved in the programme of Joint classes per one pilot (2 pilots, 200 participants). Another indicator is related to the attendance of women participants – 40% of all participants (total of 80). So, all partners must give special attention to recruiting the numbers/ sex structure of participants needed to meet the indicators.

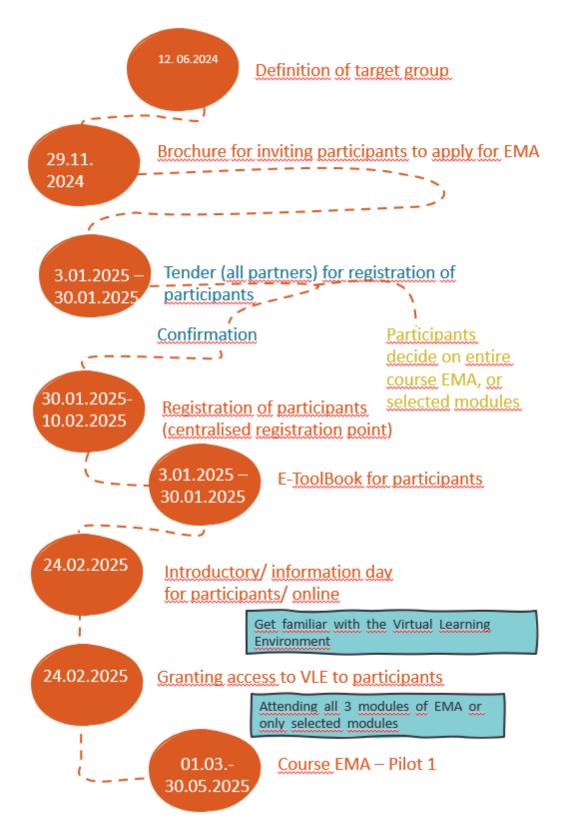


Figure 3: Participants of "Joint Classes" – admission journey

2.2 VLE

DBS uses a modern IT infrastructure, which ensures the reliable and efficient operation of all educational and business processes. We constantly update all infrastructure with new equipment and software. We place great emphasis on information security, so we invest heavily in the implementation of the latest security solutions and in employee training.

Learning technologies at DBS:

The VLE at DBS is Blackboard Learn SaaS, a learning management system (LMS) for online teaching, learning, community building, and knowledge sharing and implementation. Blackboard allows students to access all necessary learning materials online. Courses provide information about the activities and tasks necessary for successful completion. Most communication takes place within the LMS, both asynchronously and synchronously. Teachers access submitted assignments in the LMS, where they also grade and provide feedback.

<u>Class Collaborate</u>: A tool integrated into Blackboard, used for conducting webinars and meetings among students, professors, online mentors, and guests. The tool enables online webinars, meetings, presentations, and interaction with participants. The meetings are recorded and are available for later viewing.

<u>PSI Secure Browser:</u> a custom web browser designed specifically for secure online testing and assessment purposes. DOBA students use it to take secure online tests.

<u>SafeAssign and PlugScan</u>: two separate systems for detecting plagiarism. The system reviews and checks the content of the documents submitted by students against various document databases.

3 First Pilot (3 months)

After training teachers and e-tutors and registration and preparation of participants for working in an online environment, the first pilot of the course Entrepreneurial Mind in Action with its three modules will run from 1 March until 31 May (exact time to be defined).

Modules will be delivered entirely online in English in a VLE at DBS (host). DBS uses Blackboard Ultra as a learning management system (LMS).

Delivery of the first pilot will be done in collaboration and according to the division of tasks between all partner institutions. (TBD)

Each module will last 4 weeks and will be evaluated with 3 ECTS. (TBD, ev. micro-credentials)

Participants will decide if they will attend one, two or all three modules. (TBD)

Modules will be conducted in collaboration with teachers and e-tutors from selected partner institutions.

4 Evaluation of first pilot (1-2 months)

To evaluate the programme, feedback will be obtained from the teachers, e-tutors, and participants through surveys after the first pilot of all modules (June 2025).

Surveys will be developed by DBS and put on Google Drive. Links and QR codes to access the surveys will be shared among stakeholders.

The detailed content of surveys is to be elaborated by February 2025.

The survey results will be analysed and used as input into the report on the implementation of Pilot 1 (results in Deliverable D2.3—end of July 2025).

5 After the first pilot (10 months)

As seen from the Activities plan (table 2), after the deliverable D2.3 is submitted, the activities on optimisation of the course Joint classes with its 3 modules will take place partly in August and by the end of September 2025.

After optimisation of the Joint Classes the Second pilot will follow from October 2025 until January 2026 (4 months, impact of Christmas break). The activities will follow the same plan as presented for pilot 1 of the Joint Classes.

Evaluation and adjustments after the second pilot (2 months) will take place in February and March 2026 to deliver the final, well-functioning course (EMA) in the VLE. The sustainability of the course will also be considered.

Imprint

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Ecosys4you – Engaging Entrepreneurial Ecosystems for the Youth (2023-2026) strives to bridge the entrepreneurial ecosystems of the Ruhr in Germany, Varna in Bulgaria, and Slovenia by connecting young founders, start-ups, HEIs and other ecosystem actors.

Consortium









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