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MAPPING BUSINESS START-UP ECOSYSTEM IN KOSOVO

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to critically review the existing initiatives of start-up support services for entrepreneurship growth in Kosovo. In the light of an increasing government and donor activities to support start-ups in Kosovo, there is a need for evaluation of these policy interventions to guide future entrepreneurship policy. Building on the political economy of small firm intervention literature and using mapping method the study identifies and critically evaluates the technical, financial and other support services to start-ups. The study uses secondary resources to explore the initiatives and understand the entrepreneurship growth ecosystem. The findings suggest that although there is an increased trend of business support services the entrepreneurship ecosystem has not gone beyond the traditional policy measures and in many areas remains in its infancy phase of development. Challenges remain in the area of provision of alternative forms of financing, incubation space and services and moreover, in the area of support for growth-oriented startups. The study concludes by providing alternative and additional policy intervention tools.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, start-ups, Kosovo, ecosystem, technical support, financing

1. Introduction

The overall objective of this mapping exercise is to improve the efficiency of the government and donor assistance to start-ups. More specifically, the purpose of the assignment is to assess the current support packages available to start-ups in Kosovo, at various stages of business development, from the pre-incubation, incubation, seed to the expansion phase, as well as barriers and obstacles to their growth. Another aim is to identify potential needs such as infrastructure, services, and access to finance. The assessment offers recommendations which would be the basis for designing a specific policy intervention tool with the aim of removing barriers and supporting the development of start-ups. The objectives of this study are threefold. Firstly, to analyse technical

and financial support available to start-ups in Kosovo from the government, non-governmental and international institutions/organizations. Secondly, to assess and identify the barriers and potential needs such as infrastructure, services, and access to finance for the development of start-ups (Krasniqi, 2010; 2012; 2014, Peci, 2015; Williams, Krasniqi, 2018). Finally, the aim is to provide recommendations on the parameters of the envisaged EU assistance to start-ups to overcome the obstacles they face in their development, both in efficiency and in quality.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the literature in political economy of intervention to correct market failures in terms of small firms. Section 3 presents the methodology used in the study. Section 4 sets out the range of policies used to support start-ups by using a start-up

mapping matrix. Section 5 sets out conclusions and the overall start-up environment, as well as a set of policy recommendations for future interventions to support small firms.

2. Literature review: rationale for intervention in supporting business start-up

The allocation theory posits that market failure refers to the failure of price-market institutions in sustaining activities deemed desirable in the economy and it is basically a situation in which resources are not allocated to their highest valued use or maximum welfare potential (Bator, 1958). Therefore, if markets work efficiently under the equilibrium, in the competitive markets the allocation will be efficient and no market failures will follow. However, with imperfect information, financial gaps, compliance costs, resistance to change and uncertainty, very rarely does such a situation occur which requires policy intervention (Krasniqi, 2010; Williams, Krasniqi, 2018; Mustafa, Krasniqi, 2018). For example, when private companies cannot or will not provide business support services because they cannot make a commercial return or profit, even where there is demand or need for a service, such a situation is considered to be a market failure (European Commission, 2012).¹

The result of a market failure is that the needs of certain start-ups or SMEs are either not met or are only partially met. Under these circumstances, European Commission (2012) suggests that the rationale for the public provision of support services is that they will lead to employment and wealth creation that would not otherwise have occurred exactly because these services were not available. Two primary criteria for the provision of public support services, therefore, are that: (a) the service is not offered privately, even though there is a need, and; (b) the provision of the service will enable the business to develop, leading to the generation of new wealth and/or employment.

The market failure associated with SMEs and especially regarding start-up finance is due to asymmetric information between a business and a lender (Krasniqi, 2007; 2014). The business knows more about its own characteristics and the proposition for which it is seeking finance. This makes it difficult for the lender to price a loan accurately. To overcome adverse selection problems, lenders typically use collateral as insurance against default on the loan. Banks and other institutions usually use collateral as a signal of the borrower's commitment to the venture and their own assessment of the risk. Low risk borrowers are more likely to put their own assets at risk. This leads to the situation where we

have potential good projects that can be profitable and sustainable. As a consequence, business actors cannot have adequate access to funding for their ideas to be implemented in the start-up phase.

However, if left to the market, start-ups will not be able to meet collateral requirements despite potentially viable projects. As a result, innovative and promising projects will disappear if there are no intervention programmes in place. There is a common opinion that policy intervention is justified under these circumstances. A good intervention in this case is to use policy mechanisms to alleviate the risk to the private sector caused by asymmetric information. Several policy initiatives have been designed throughout the world to make market more efficient such as the Start-up Loan Guarantee Scheme (SFLGS), a long-standing government intervention to alleviate this market failure, which is being used to promote start-up development.

In terms of innovation, the Oxera (2005)² report identifies four major market failures that may have a significant impact on the innovation process. Accordingly, if left to the market, projects that, from a private perspective, are unprofitable, but would generate large social benefits, may not be taken forward. Firms rarely innovate alone as a result of bad coordination and lack of networking. However, problems may exist that have an adverse impact on the ability of companies to coordinate or at least interact, and so deliver innovation. A wide range of problems may arise, including difficulties in coordinating R&D and inadequate access by smaller firms to the innovation system. Finally, the European Commission (2012) suggests that imperfect and asymmetric information affects, in particular, financial markets. Due to a lack of information, SMEs engaged in high-tech innovative projects, with good prospects, may find it difficult to obtain funding.

In the area of provision of training and skills development for start-ups, there is common agreement that start-ups are unable to pay for services of professional training or consultancy providers. Even more frequently, the SMEs and these social start-ups' demand for non-financial services such as training or consultancy may be low because they do not recognize that these services can raise their productivity and growth. In other words, because of a lack of information or because of the risk, these benefits are not supported (Hallberg, 2000: 7). As a result, small firms and especially start-ups tend to use fewer external sources of advice than larger firms, which in turn may limit the growth potential of start-ups.

There is evidence from both developing and developed countries that well designed training can lead

to modest increases in business start-ups but little robust evidence is available. Klinger & Schundeln (2011) analysed the results of business training program that the NGO TechnoServe ran in Nicaragua and El Salvador and found that support in the formulation of a business plan has led to a 4–9% higher probability of business start-ups for trainees who did not own a business before. Fukanuma, et al. (2006) also find that firms which borrow from government financial institutions, grow faster than firms which borrow from private lenders, after the eighth year since loans have been made. These findings together suggest that government programs have contributed to the long run growth of small firms that private lenders are reluctant to make loans to.

However, finding the correct practical policies to address these theoretical market failures is not easy. Many governments initially established their own VC funds, but these have been largely abandoned as political influences distort investment decisions and government officials lack the ability to assess and manage investment opportunities (Nightingale et al., 2009). To conclude, there is a need for intervention, in different forms of support for start-ups. This should be cautiously chosen in order to correct these market failures. For example, when designing an intervention, particular attention should be paid not to introduce incentives that encourage bad quality projects. Risk sharing by entrepreneurs is the best solution to increase the risk involvement and seriousness of entrepreneurs on grant scheme support. The same applies for subsidizing consultancy and other forms of direct support.

3. Methodology

The research methodology for conducting the assessment involved a combination of literature review such as reviewing existing documents (reports, articles, laws, strategic documents), best practices in Kosovo and other similar contexts, meetings and interviews with key stakeholders, and completing several data collection instruments (matrix of intervention programmes/projects) which were designed solely for this purpose. More specifically, the methodology for conducting this study included the analysis of technical and financial support available in Kosovo (including government, non-governmental and international organizations, business support providers) based on the desk review of primary and secondary information, reports, studies and other available information about the current state of the start-up environment, including barriers/obstacles and best practices in start-up support. We also conducted stocktaking and analysis of the business start-up environment, barriers and poten-

tial needs (infrastructure, services, and access to finance) by identifying gaps and future interventions. Furthermore, we conducted interviews and consultations with the representatives of the relevant institutions to identify current and planned initiatives of start-up support packages and measures. The relevant institutions include both governmental, donor-led initiatives/projects, NGOs, and private initiatives such as: central and local government, Ministry of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency/MTI, Kosovo Credit Guarantee Fund (KCGF) and selected municipalities, business associations and chambers of commerce as well as business support providers, banks and MFIs. We also interviewed a number of current and potential beneficiaries of start-up projects implemented in Kosovo.

4. Mapping the financial and technical assistance to start-ups

This mapping exercise includes mapping and verification of all the actors such as existing institutions/supporters providing help to start-ups, both technical and financial. The first step in developing a start-up ecosystem from the public or donor intervention perspective is to identify its private-public stakeholders, its instruments and existing facilities. For this purpose, we designed a start-up matrix which contains all relevant information about the key stakeholders and the range of services being offered for start-ups. Secondly, after mapping of existing technical and financial support in the matrix we could explore if there is an overlapping of any initiatives/projects or instruments. We also looked into possible lack of best practices or instruments that have been used successfully in other countries that could be used as models from which lessons can be drawn how to address similar problems of the start-up ecosystem within Kosovo. The first column in Table 1 lists institutions/organisations/agencies/donors, the second reports technical assistance services and the third column reports all financial instruments to support start-ups.

The matrix of start-up support shows that there is a large number of available intervention programmes and projects to support start-ups in Kosovo. Numerous government programmes and NGOs, donor agencies, projects and profit organisations are actively involved in supporting start-ups in Kosovo. In particular, Kosovo has benefited largely from international donor activity to support start-ups. The entrepreneurship ecosystem in Kosovo offers many initiatives for start-up support, but they are fragmented and the majority of them do not seem to work together. As such, they cannot utilize potential

complementarities between projects and even benefit from a more integrated system for start-up support. During the field interviews with stakeholders, one could note that these instruments and projects could learn from each other, but appear to be working separately. An emerging trend in terms of technical assistance is heavily skewed towards business skills trainings for start-ups and various forms of business consulting and mentoring. As for financial support, there is frequent use of traditional forms of start-up financing such as grants, while the more modern types of financing such as crowdfunding is non-existent or at best very limited. What follows will explain these instruments.

4.1 Financial assistance

Entrepreneurial finance is rapidly evolving all over the world. Entrepreneurs are combining traditional debt and equity start-up finance (e.g., friends, family, angel investors, venture capitalists, and occasionally banks) with alternative ways of financing (Bruton et al., 2015). Being still in its initial stage of development, Kosovo has not fully exploited the benefits of all traditional methods of start-up finance. Finance start-up support has been limited mainly to provision of grants, equipment and machinery, co-financing grants, whereas angel investors, equity financing and venture capitalist funds are almost non-existent (Krasniqi, 2010).

On the other hand, start-ups face difficulties in accessing finance for new innovative projects (Krasniqi, 2006; Krasniqi, Kutllovci, 2008; Hashi, Krasniqi, 2011; Lajqi, Krasniqi, 2017; Krasniqi, Peci, 2017). Consequently, there is a necessity to find creative solutions to fill this funding gap for start-ups and SMEs, for which the access to traditional banking system has been almost impossible. Therefore, it is crucial to have concentrated efforts of all stakeholders, including, but not limited to, all government institutions and agencies, business community, and international donors to explore the possibilities in implementing alternative financing instruments for start-ups. Such alternative finance schemes proved to be successful in other contexts and could become more sustainable in the long run. Some of these examples such as crowdfunding platforms, angel investors, venture capitalists etc., might become effective instruments for start-up funding in Kosovo.

Our research shows that grants have been heavily used mechanisms to address the finance gap for start-ups. Usually, grant schemes take the form of a matching grant scheme and a competitive grant scheme combined with some sort of business plan competitions. The programmes/projects are aimed to attract talented people with impactful business

ideas. Some of the grants involved co-financing by local entrepreneurs to share the risk associated with the projects, while others were directly used for full coverage to provide equity-free seed capital.

Findings from field interviews with stakeholders suggest that any grant scheme should be based on some type of co-investment in order to have some risk involvement by entrepreneurs. There is a concern by stakeholders that using grants without co-financing by entrepreneurs may distort incentives by increasing the pool of low quality applicants and making screening process more complicated. The example of our mapping exercise shows that in several programmes presented in this report participants were exposed to organized and open competition and then became connected to trainers and mentors to facilitate start-up creation and growth. Some of these projects (e.g. UNDP, GIZ and others in Kosovo) have used start-up programmes to support socially excluded groups and diaspora returnees to enter a self-employment career (Krasniqi, Williams, 2018; Williams, Krasniqi, 2018). These are examples of connecting grant schemes with support through skills training and mentoring. The majority of stakeholders have agreed that combining technical assistance with financial would boost the success rate of start-ups.

Loans. Loans are the primary funding instrument for SMEs, with the vast majority of the loan volume coming from local banks. Shorter-term working capital loans are the most popular, while investment loans are viewed as less in demand due to uncertain political and economic conditions. Although lending activity, especially for SME loans, was on the rise in recent years in Kosovo, especially during 2015, the start-up finance from local banks is not present (Central Bank of Kosovo, 2017)³. The situation with female entrepreneurs is even worse. Kosovo banks do not have gender-disaggregated data; however, they estimate that women-led SMEs represent only 0.5-5% of their loan portfolios.

Business Angels. Angel investors are typically equity investors in start-up companies in the early stage. Angel investors are usually wealthy individuals that come together in investor networks seeking to find entrepreneurial opportunities. Investments by business angels can fill the gap between venture capital and debt finance, especially for start-ups.

Until a few years ago, angel investors in Kosovo were virtually non-existent. Although the angel investors' network is growing in Kosovo, it is still in its infant stage. Today there are only a few business angels' networks such as Kosovo Business Angel Network-KOSBAN, MDA foundation, girafa.com and some individual angel investors. There is no clear evidence of the results produced by the Kosovo Business Angels' Network.

Table 1 Matrix of technical, finance, and infrastructure support to start-ups in Kosovo

	Technical assistance						Financing						
	Entrepreneurial skills for start-ups	Mentors, advisors, consultants and coaching	Networking and Match-making (B2B, trade fairs, events)	Incubators, Hubs, Innovation labs, co-working spaces and related services	Fostering linkages between the actors in the start-up ecosystem	Regulatory Framework/ Infrastructure/ Capacity Building for policy	Grants	Loans	Loan guarantees	Business angels	Equity and Venture capitalists and scale-ups	Crowd-funding	Accelerators
KOSME (Swiss & ADA) KOSOVO SME PROMOTION PROGRAMME (KOSME)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓							
EBRD	✓	✓	✓					✓					
Innovation Centre Kosovo (ICK)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
Jakova Innovation Centre - JIC	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓						✓
Centre for Entrepreneurship and Executive Development (CEED) / SEAF, USAID, FMO	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓						✓
Business Support Centre Kosovo (BSCK)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					
STIKK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓
Management Development Associate (MDA) foundation	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓				
D&D Business Support Centre	✓	✓	✓			✓							
VentureUP/University of Prishtina	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Gjirafa.com	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓			✓
COSME	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Kosovo Chamber of Commerce		✓	✓		✓	✓							
Business Alliance of Kosovo (BAC)		✓	✓		✓	✓							

Source: Authors' interviews with stakeholders and information available in websites of organizations

Some initiatives of business angel networks struggled with their work and are no longer in operations (e.g. EYE initiative). Notwithstanding, business angels can become a promising way of financing of start-ups in Kosovo. The government of Kosovo and the support of donors have an important role to play. For instance, the government could help develop an internet platform to provide information on angel investors in Kosovo or find interested actors to invest in projects in the country. Furthermore, it could support open calls for business ideas, pitching events, B2B which could then more easily link to the business angel's network in Kosovo and the region. Kosovo can learn from the example of the UK's government supporting BANs and national campaigns highlighting the role and importance of business angels. In addition, various forms of fiscal and non-fiscal incentives can be used to trigger investments in start-ups as in the UK.

Fintech/crowdfunding. Crowdfunding draws inspiration from concepts like microfinance (Poetz & Shreier, 2012; Morduch, 1999) but it represents a unique category of fundraising, with different vehicles, processes, and goals (World Bank, 2013)⁴. Crowdfunding is estimated to be a growing \$5 billion global industry. It is the practice of funding a project or venture by raising small amounts of money from a large number of individuals, typically via the Internet, using an intermediary known as a platform (Balkan Economic Forum, 2017)⁵. The crowdfunding emerged as a way of allowing individual investors an opportunity to pool relatively small amounts of money in order to meet the funding requirements of new or expanding ventures. In Kosovo, there are very few of them. We managed to find only Prishtina Hackerspace, a co-working open experimentation space in Pristina, which is established exclusively for technological, educational, cultural and scientific purposes. The organization uses the crowdfunding platform. As of January 2017, they have had 231 backers who pledged \$16,994 to help bring this project to life. As such, there is an emerging need to use this alternative form of financing and Kosovo could draw on successful examples of other countries. Some preconditions for developing crowdfunding platforms already exist, such as large Kosovan diaspora community and high ICT potential in Kosovo.

4.2 Technical assistance

The mapping analysis shows that a majority of organizations and donor-funded programs/projects offer some type of technical assistance. Technical assistance ranges from simple business plan training to mentoring, coaching, B2B events, networking, and matchmaking (Table 1).

One important issue emerging from the mapping and the interviews with organizations and other relevant stakeholders offering business support services is that the support is in most cases donor driven, posing a concern about the future sustainability of start-up support programs. There are also some local initiatives based solely on government funding, but to a limited extent. For example, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports annually runs the entrepreneurship training program throughout Kosovo. Municipality of Gjakova also established a grant scheme for local start-ups and SMEs. All Business Development Organizations (both NGO and private companies) who deal with start-ups have pointed out the challenge of working with start-ups. As suggested by other examples in the literature, on the supply side of business support services there is a tendency of gradually moving towards the well-established and well-performing start-ups that are able to pay market prices for these services. The ongoing concern remains that without donor or government funding, only a few start-ups will be able to use the external advice and business support services.

The numerous intervention programs have helped in developing the market for Business Development Services (BDS) in Kosovo. In particular, using the cost-sharing scheme has produced results in educating clients to pay for services (Organization for Economic and Community Development, 2017)⁶. Under these schemes, firms and start-ups are more willing to pay market prices for BDS. Some consulting services and training support are under-demanded because start-ups may fail to appreciate their "true" benefits. Therefore, temporarily subsidized services may encourage firms to try them, producing a "demonstration effect" that increases demand (Hallberg, 2000). Supply side development is also possible by temporarily subsidizing BDS providers. This may encourage them to search for better products and delivery mechanisms, resulting in a lower cost of service provision, specifically designed for start-ups. However, the newcomer start-

ups need ongoing support at their initial phase because of restricted access to, or high cost of finance. Hence, these newcomers may have an impact on utilization of consultancy, training and other business support services. As suggested in an interview with a CEO of an organization dealing with start-up support, the first step is often helping them better understand their business needs. Providing adequate guidance in the beginning is likely to increase their demand for consultancy services in the future. Helping start-ups raise awareness of the benefits of business development services and increase trust in service providers is another issue for consideration when designing support packages for start-ups.

5. Conclusion and policy proposals

There is still a limited number of BDS programmes/projects funded by domestic funds. Most of them are funded by donors. Some of the best practices have been translated into annual projects funded by the Government of Kosovo (e.g. Entrepreneurship Skills Training Program funded by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Voucher Scheme/KIESA). Our findings show that there is a need for larger infusion of investment capital to modernize outdated plants and equipment. Current financing instruments are usually limited to less than 10,000 euros for start-up support. There is a need to move the policy support of start-ups to next level by designing instruments to support early-stage growth of start-ups.

In addition, there is a lack of understanding of the benefits of borrowing among SMEs. There is a need to design new instruments for post-start-up phase of development. Donors should encourage alternative forms of financing. Currently the majority of local start-ups and SMEs are unaware of crowd-funding. Consequently, the donor intervention would promote these tools.

There is a need to promote the business angel culture by supporting the creation of business angel networks, by helping to set up a national association of business angels and sponsoring roadshows to popularize the idea among the start-ups as well as existing businesses which are expected to act as angel investors. The already existing community of business angels, although very limited, could form a base for future development.

On the basis of our investigation, we find it would be highly desirable for the Government of Kosovo

to implement the following measures. To start with, a Single Point of Contact/office or online portal should be developed where start-ups can get advice on public instruments and funds. Possibilities of involving private initiatives should also be explored. Kosovo could draw from European Commission (2017)⁷ best practice such as Start-up Europe. This portal would integrate all activities of donors, government, NGOs and other stakeholders. Start-ups would have a platform that offers easy access of start-ups to relevant information. At the same time, this platform would make any call for start-up support programs more competitive and hence contribute to more effective intervention programs.

There should be opportunities for networking and capacity building for entrepreneurs, private sector investors, and the donor community through events (annual forums, events for entrepreneurs and start-ups), through business plan competitions and start-up fairs, and through social networks. The government should also support capacity-building initiatives that are targeted to policy makers, incubation managers, and trainers.

Investment and growth criteria should be developed to incentivize start-ups to achieve long-term growth and attain their full potential for employment and income generation, and thus contribute to the economic development. These incentives are rarely applied. It is important to recognize a need for scaling incentives based on some growth or investment criteria. It is equally important to design specific programs that could foster cooperation of large firms with start-ups. Experiences of the Co-Creation Lab Vienna (Vienna Business Agency, 2017)⁸ are useful examples how to design a program to support linkages between large firms and start-ups for the benefit of both sides.

The role of the education system is to promote key competencies in creativity and innovation. There is no single body or council within the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology or Ministry of Trade and Industry that would be responsible for reviewing curricula and teaching materials, establishing innovation labs in schools, providing entrepreneurial career advice, and monitoring education performance in terms of entrepreneurial learning. There is no Entrepreneurial Learning Strategy which is required by the Small Business Act, and consequently, there is no action plan adopted. Promotion of entrepreneurship as a key competency in primary, secondary and tertiary education is a criti-

cal step to increase entrepreneurial culture among youth, which in turn in the long run will increase the potential supply of innovative business ideas.

A market-oriented education and entrepreneurship skills training to support and meet the needs of a growing and increasingly more competitive private sector is a precondition for SME development (Krasniqi, Mustafa, 2016). Further action may include the introduction of entrepreneurship and other specific subjects such as creativity and digital skills into the curriculum in primary and secondary education. This will promote entrepreneurial culture and potentially increase the pool of viable business ideas in the long run. Makerspaces, creativity labs and similar hubs could be a good example of boosting creativity and promoting entrepreneurship culture nation-wide. The following should be promoted: networks between e.g. co-working spaces, fab-labs, start-up and IT hubs and other lab formats; embedded IT innovations in traditional sectors like e.g. agriculture; Innovation Think Labs with lateral thinkers from different disciplines. Innovation should be fostered through support for IT sector as the key enabling and supporting technology for all industrial sectors for start-ups. Efforts should be made to strengthen creative thinking and entrepreneurial mindset at universities. A recent initiative in establishing the VentureUp incubator at University of Prishtina is a promising initiative that could be expanded to other higher educational institutions.

In line with Hallberg's proposal (2000), Kosovo could learn from experiences of other countries, which show that facilitating the provision of services by private providers and stimulating the demand for them by small enterprise clients is an effective way to raise the coverage, quality, and sustainability of services. The shift toward market provision of BDS reflects a move toward a "systems approach" analogous to the microfinance revolution. As with MFIs, it would lead to an entrepreneurial culture with an emphasis on being business-like and demand-led at the institutional level. It directs government and donor intervention toward facilitat-

ing transactions between small enterprise "clients" (as opposed to "beneficiaries") and BDS providers seeking to develop profitable market niches (Hagnauer, 1999). Supply-side interventions to promote BDS market development can be used to extend and replicate models of financially sustainable, cost-effective services. Demand-side interventions, such as matching grants and vouchers, may be justified on a temporary basis if markets are underdeveloped in Kosovo because start-ups are not aware of the benefits of BDS, or perceive them as risk. Nevertheless, the success of demand-side subsidies should be judged by whether they develop rather than distort markets.

In the area of finance, there is a need for alternative financial instruments to support start-up creation and growth. There is an emergent need to design support programmes for start-ups operating in a promising sector based on Kosovo's competitive advantage. Due to relatively low start-up capital required to scale their business and thanks to the universality of their services, start-ups in the IT sector, for instance, are often seeking clients abroad from a very early stage of their operations and find them as their main source of growth. At the policy level, therefore, it is suggested to provide tailored support based on specific business needs of the company. The ICT sector could be linked to modern forms of financing based on online platforms such as crowd-funding.

The major limitation of this study is that it only evaluates various start-up support packages in the context of one country. Future studies need to take into account cross-regional comparisons of these initiatives to gain a better insight into the challenges and successes of the implementation of business start-up support instruments. In addition, there is a need for more systematic research using a large-scale nationally representative survey. Regardless of its limitations, if this study stimulates entrepreneurship scholars to conduct evaluations of start-up support policy measures and instruments, our objective will have been achieved.

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POSLOVNI EKO-SUSTAV ZA NOVOOSNOVANA PODUZEĆA NA KOSOVU

SAŽETAK

Cilj je ovoga rada kritički razmotriti postojeće inicijative koje se odnose na usluge za potporu novoosnovanim poduzećima kojima se potiče razvoj poduzetništva na Kosovu. S obzirom na porast potpore nadležnih tijela i donatora novoosnovanim poduzećima na Kosovu, bilo bi dobro ocijeniti te intervencije te na tim ocjenama i iskustvima temeljiti buduću poduzetničku politiku. Oslanjajući se na ekonomsku literaturu o intervencijama za mala poduzeća. U radu se koristi metoda mapiranja kako bi se identificirale i kritički ocijenile službe za tehničku, financijsku i drugu pomoć novoosnovanim poduzećima. Na temelju sekundarnih izvora analiziraju se inicijative i razmatra eko-sustav za razvoj poduzetništva. Iako je zamjetan porast usluga za potporu poduzetništvu, eko-sustav za poduzetništvo nije se daleko odmakao od tradicionalnih mjera politike te se u mnogim područjima tek počinje razvijati. Potrebni su znatno veći naponi u području alternativnih izvora financiranja, inkubatorskih prostora i usluga, a osobito u pružanju potpore novoosnovanim poduzećima usmjerenima na brzi rast. U zaključku se iznose alternativne i dodatne intervencijske mjere.

Ključne riječi: poduzetništvo, novoosnovana poduzeća, Kosovo, eko-sustav, tehnička potpora, financiranje