



READING EXTENSION Time

1. Read the following text.

Portuguese youth determined not to give up in face of spiralling unemployment

Facing a desolate job market, young university graduates in Portugal are being forced to rethink their career plans.

5 With its abandoned buildings and quiet streets, the Baixa Pombalina, Lisbon's historic commercial district, has gone into hibernation. This once vibrant part of the Portuguese capital appears resigned to the economic chill that has descended upon the country. But at 30 Rua da
10 Prata – the former silversmiths' street – spring has come. The building's ground floor is home to a designer souvenir shop. Above the retailer are four floors crammed with offices, topped with a banner reading "Startups Lisboa". Inside,
15 the employees of 45 fledgling companies are busy chirping away on the phone and picking at their keyboards in this appropriately named "business incubator". They are, for the most part, recent university graduates. Startups
20 Lisboa has given them a perfect place to come in from the cold and test out their ideas.

Luís Martins has a workspace on the third floor. A desk, a chair, an iMac and a handful of business cards are his only professional
25 accoutrements. Like every other young entrepreneur who has settled here, Martins' work is confined to the computer screen. It is not just a choice; it's a requirement. For a place in this incubator, a start-up must exploit the
30 Internet and must provide services outside the offices. Martins created Zaask, a web platform that connects tradesmen and professionals to potential clients, much like the US-based

Start ^{up} Lisboa Incubadora de Empresas

35 site local.com. "People are always looking for local service providers, from plumbers to web designers and photographers. The website also includes a rating system that allows providers to build their reputation online," he explains. Zaask has caught on, and may owe at least part
40 of its success to Portugal's economic downturn. "This platform would not exist, or would be less interesting, if we were not in the middle of an economic crisis. Before people didn't need to advertise their personal skills to the world, they had a job," Martins admits. "Our model is
45 imported from the United States. A place like this, where several entrepreneurs work side by side, it helps boost optimism," Martins says. "There are many young businesspeople who
50 are unemployed, who can create their own jobs and are moving into places like this one. Various studies have shown that Portuguese people are the most enterprising in Europe, says João Vasconcelos, the president of Startups Lisboa.

Clément Perrouault "Portuguese youth determined not to give up in face of spiralling unemployment" www.france24.com (abridged), accessed in January 2014

