

POLICY PARER

Lessons Learned

Seminar on Entrepreneurship Education,
11th October 2013, Brussels



Seminar Entrepreneurship Education Lessons Learned

Background

Earlall has been working actively on youth policies over the last three years; the first step has been the work carried out by the working group on youth policies in the framework of *One Step Ahead* project: comparative analysis of measures dedicated to youth in different policy sectors, such as education and training, employment, health, housing, security. More information can be found in Earlall website¹.

At the end of this process and in order to respond to the European debate on *Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan*², the Earlall members decided to exchange best practice on entrepreneurship education through a thematic seminar. Representatives of Regional Governments, VET institutions, National administrations and research centres took part in the seminar presenting their regional contributions regarding the topic whereas representatives of DG Education and Culture and DG Enterprise of European Commission presented the latest EU policy initiatives³.

Earlall is committed to continue working on youth policies in 2014; in particular in June 2014 a seminar will be dedicated to apprenticeship.

The aim of this document is to summarise the lessons learned during the seminar on the regional measures on entrepreneurship education.

Why Entrepreneurship?

The youth unemployment rate is still increasing in many European Countries. This dramatic situation has important implications not only from social and economic points of view but also for democracy as it is creating huge inequalities and preventing a big part of the society to enjoy social and economic rights.

Furthermore, it represents a waste of potential and competences of young people who do not find accomplishment in a fair and recognized job.

The European Union has been giving since December 2012 inputs and means (Youth Employment Package⁴) to face such a dramatic situation, for example through the youth guarantee initiative⁵.

Regional Governments are also working hard on this field and are implementing measures to improve training, employment and self-employment of young people. Indeed entrepreneurship

¹ <http://www.earlall.eu/page.asp?n=newsdetails&i=14678>

² http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/entrepreneurship-2020/index_en.htm

³ More information can be found in Earlall website: <http://www.earlall.eu/page.asp?n=newsdetails&i=15596>

⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1036&newsId=1731&furtherNews=yes>

⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079&langId=en>

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and self-employment are seen as a one of the ways to fight unemployment and Regional Government support measures to foster entrepreneurship.

Supporting entrepreneurship means both measures for entrepreneurship education and measures to support business start-up. “*Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship is the ability to turn ideas into action*”⁶: entrepreneurship education programmes indeed aim at developing such competences in young people as part of their general or vocational training. Alongside with entrepreneurship education, regions also implement measures for supporting the start-up of a new business, though financial support but also by giving professional advice.

Characteristics

Projects dedicated to entrepreneurship education implemented in the EARLALL member Regions have the following characteristics:

AIMS OF THE PROJECTS: A common objective is to develop sense of initiative and entrepreneurial mindset of pupils, which can be defined as creativity, sense of responsibility, communication, team work attitude, organisational skills. It is important to develop both social competences and soft skills; and to improve the understanding of economic processes. The regions also make efforts to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship as one vocational option and to raise awareness among students, schools and families about entrepreneurship.

Example: university for Foreigners of Siena has developed a research project called LSECON aimed at promoting the internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises through business language courses in Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and L2 Italian on the most advanced e-learning and mobile learning tools.

PARTNERSHIP between many different actors, especially from business world, educational institutions and governments, is essential to design programmes.

Example: URRATSBAT is a programme for entrepreneurship education in VET institutions implemented in Basque Country. The programme is implemented by the cooperation of Education and Employment departments of Basque Governments, VET institutions and teachers, credit institutions, Provincial Council and entrepreneurs.

Example: in Brittany entrepreneurs participate actively in all phases of the entrepreneurship education programmes from the designing to the implementation, providing training to teachers and pupils, offering equipment, contributing to the products created by pupils, participating in the validation process.

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE to overcome legal, administrative and financial burdens to start their own business.

Example: In Baden-Württemberg, bar associations have been involved by the Ministry of Economics and Finance in entrepreneurship education programmes to give professional legal advice to teachers and pupils starting a new mini-company.

⁶ Key competence for lifelong learning:
http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11090_en.htm

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Example: Autonomous Province of Trento has introduced the Individual Learning Account cards (ILA) to enable the working age population – with priority given to young people – to participate in internships in institutions, organisations and companies, or in training programmes aimed at developing professional and entrepreneurial skills.

SOCIAL ASPECT is very important: social cooperatives and social enterprises are involved as well as microcredit banks; people with disabilities or out of the labour market are encouraged to participate in entrepreneurship projects.

Example: *Companion* is a Swedish network of cooperatives that supports those willing to create a social enterprise through training and consulting.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT: entrepreneurship education allows students to get to know better their local environment from an economic and business point of view and while creating a company, they contribute to the economic vitality of their cities.

Example: In *ITC Vespucci*, a VET school in Livorno, Tuscany, students create their own companies in relation with the local context: they are learning to see their territory as an integrated system with development objectives common to all different actors.

REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN COMPETITIONS: The companies created by young people in the framework of entrepreneurship education projects participate to such competitions.

Example: *Agenzia Umbria Ricerche* organises with the European Social Funds, regional competitions of companies created by students in VET Institutions.

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