

FORUM “TRAINING FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP”
Sophia Antipolis 19/20 October 2000

Overall Conclusions and follow-up

The Commission’s Response to the BEST Task Force Report recommended Member States to develop actions in the area of education and training for entrepreneurship. This Forum gave Member States, education and training practitioners, the opportunity to learn from each other by the exchange of good practice.

1) Conclusions

Three main **principles** arose from the forum’s discussions.

- **An enterprise-driven education is needed, fostering a risk-orientated mindset**
- **Comprehensive strategies have to be established, involving every level of education, from primary school to university and all the relevant players (teachers/enterprises/pupils and students).**
- **Entrepreneurship must be considered as a basic skill to be sustained through lifelong learning.**

In order to implement such principles, the following **types of interventions** were highlighted:

1) The development of entrepreneurship within the current education systems at an early age.

Participants highlighted the distinction between a broader concept of education for entrepreneurial attitudes and skills, which includes developing personal qualities such as creativity and spirit of initiative, and a more specific concept of training relating to how to create and manage a business. The importance of this first broader concept was underlined, as a means to forge entrepreneurial attitudes, and eventually lead to business creation.

2) The strengthening of co-operation between education and training authorities, enterprises and business associations. Co-operation has to be facilitated, promoted and rewarded, notably in order to develop practical entrepreneurial learning-by-doing.

3) The training of trainers, notably teachers.

This includes not only improving the ability of trainers to understand and teach entrepreneurship but also the recognition of their role in this area through the setting-up of reward-incentive systems and appropriate training.

4) The development of entrepreneurship initiated within enterprises in order to promote self-employment and/or the development of an adaptable and entrepreneurial workforce.

2) Assessment of the good practices in support of the conclusions

Focused on enterprise education and training, the cases of good practice presented ranged from broad policy initiatives at national level (cf. some are mentioned in the national BEST reports such as the Danish example that is annexed) to specific projects implemented locally by institutions or associations. Some examples extracted from the list in annex 1 support these conclusions.

1) The development of entrepreneurship within the current education systems at an early age

Most of the cases presented awareness-raising activities. The case from the Danish Ministry concerned the involvement of students from upper secondary schools in a business game. This consisted of completing a project based on a fictitious business idea.

Other cases, e.g. “Entreprendre au Lycée”, consisted of involving students in the development of a real business during the school year.

The cases presented by Scottish Enterprise and the Wales Education Business Partnership Network were good examples targeting mainly primary school pupils.

2) The strengthening of co-operation between education and training authorities, enterprises and business associations

Most of the cases highlighted the importance of such co-operation. The case presented by the Chamber of Commerce of Padova was a good example of co-operation between national, regional and local authorities and enterprises at a regional level. The case presented by the Centre for Enterprise, Leicester, provided for a dialogue between undergraduates and successful entrepreneurs in order to inspire them by contrasting their ideas with those of successful entrepreneurs.

3) The training of trainers notably teachers

Most of the cases presented explicitly included the training of trainers (e.g. the case from the Municipality of Skelleftea or from the Chamber of Commerce of Padova). This stems from the fact that within schools the agents for change are teachers. Trainers, especially teachers, should be made more aware of entrepreneurship since they often are called upon to assist pupils or students in the development of their entrepreneurial attitudes and skills.

4) The development of entrepreneurship initiated within enterprise

Good cases of promotion of entrepreneurship within companies i.e. intrapreneurship were presented (e.g. Siemens and France Telecom). They all presented the promotion of intrapreneurship as a means to support innovation and competitiveness.

In general, participants acknowledged that in assessing the impact of entrepreneurship education and training, attention should not only be restricted to the business birth rate, which would be a long-term result, but also on behavioural attitudes and on the development of a more entrepreneurial culture.

3) Participation

350 participants attended the forum with more than half coming from EU countries other than France and third countries. Participants represented a wide range of institutions and bodies amongst which there were education and training authorities, local development agencies, representatives of the national authorities, enterprises and business organisations.

The number of cases of good practices discussed was 17.

4) Follow-up actions

The forum was an occasion to identify good practice cases that are currently implemented. Consequently, the major political challenge is now to make these experiences available to other regions or countries which may wish to introduce or adapt them to their own circumstances.

Two ways forward:

- Rapid dissemination of the good practices discussed in the Forum through the electronic availability of the proceedings of the Nice Sophia Antipolis Forum;
- Identification of priority areas with corresponding indicators that would allow to monitoring of how the conclusions are translated into practice in the different countries and/or regions.

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ANNEXE 1 Good practice cases

Workshop 1

1-A) Scottish Enterprise (UK)

The Scottish case provides an example of a **comprehensive enterprise education strategy**

In recent years, an infrastructure has been put in place in Scotland in order to provide enterprise education and training from primary school to university. This has been possible thanks to both public and private funding. A series of programmes were presented, involving all the different stages in the education system. These schemes address school children from the age of 5-8 onwards, and have a wide coverage in the Scottish system. For instance, by means of two programmes addressing primary schools, about 3000 teachers and 30.000 pupils have been reached, covering 60 % of the schools in Scotland. The Scottish case seems to be a very good example of an integrated and coherent policy, with widespread activities touching all the different levels of education.

1-B) Municipality of Skelleftea (Sweden)

The Skelleftea School Project (north Sweden region) concerns the entire educational system, from pre-and compulsory basic level to upper secondary and post-secondary level. As a result some 50 pedagogical projects were started in schools and hundred of businesses and other organisations were involved in school projects, some 200 upper-secondary students gained experience in enterprise and some 200 students were allotted 'father companies'. The hub was a Comprehensive Project directed by a Steering Committee consisting of Executives from the Municipal Offices for Education plus Executives and representatives from local Trade and Industry. Also with a view to achieving creative and enterprising schools and to providing the students with entrepreneurial attitudes and skills, a **teacher-training** course 'The Crea Pilot' was designed by the Steering Committee and the Teacher Training College. The 42 participating teachers came from all parts of the school system. In the course the teachers tried out in practice what they learned in theory; they had to think through and try out a method for bringing out creativity and an enterprising spirit in their own classrooms. They were also encouraged to work together with the surrounding community. Local businesses also participated in the course.

1-C) Ministry of Education, Rectorat Aix-Marseille (France)

The initiative called "**Entreprendre au Lycée**" has involved since 1991 about 130 secondary schools and thousands of students in the south of France (*Région Provence Alpes Cote d'Azur*).

The idea is to offer the students - on a voluntary basis - the possibility of **creating a "mini-enterprise"**, with the obligation to arrive at a concrete production (of goods or services) for real customers by the end of the school year. So, this is not a simulation but a **real business practice**.

The students will have to find a business idea themselves and to develop it, the role of the teachers being to ensure a methodological framework for their activity. The new enterprise will be operational for just one year (the school year, from

November until May). In fact, the main objective of this initiative is to develop the entrepreneurial abilities of the students, and not to create new businesses. Students have to work at their projects outside the normal class hours. Enterprises in the region are associated with the project, and act as tutors of the mini-enterprises created.

This experience has been proving successful for almost ten years. It has to be pointed out that the National Ministry of Education has decided to launch a **reform of the education system** based on similar principles. This concerns multidisciplinary projects with vocational characteristics.

1-D) Ministry of Education (Denmark)

The Danish government in the context of a broader programme for enterprise education launched the following initiative.

It involves 43 schools in the upper secondary level and one third of the students attending a course in business economics. The idea here is to involve students in **business games**. About 900 pupils every year complete a project based on a fictitious business idea. By doing so, they are in direct contact with an entrepreneurial way of thinking. Pupils are not encouraged to leave the school and enter directly into the business world, but rather to move on into further education. An external jury finally evaluates the best business ideas, with the best 10 participating to national finals.

1-E) The Wales Education Business Partnership Network (UK)

Working in partnership with other organisations, Education Business Partnerships (EBPs) in Wales have developed a wide range of programmes for students aged fourteen years and over, and for giving teachers direct experience of business and industry.

The Education Business Partnership in West Wales has recently developed a **Primary Enterprise programme**, addressed to students of primary schools. The aims of the programme are to develop awareness of business and the local economy, satisfy school curriculum requirements for links with industry, and develop pupils' key skills. This programme has been referred to as good practice by the Schools Inspectorate in Wales and by the Wales Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

1-F) Small Business Institute, Turku (Finland)

Entrepreneurship in the Cyberspace – Distance Education Programme on Entrepreneurship in the Upper Secondary School for Adults.

In 1998, the Small Business Institute launched a Distance Education Programme on Entrepreneurship Studies in the upper-secondary school level (DIEPES), as a part of a larger distance education project.

The students are enrolled in one of the available upper-secondary schools for adults.

This programme provides a new, flexible way of learning for people who are working at the same time. The main objective is to increase entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills in the society. The primary target group of the studies is entrepreneurs and personnel within SMEs. Secondly, it is targeted to all persons interested in entrepreneurship.

The reasons for setting-up the programme were to provide new skills and knowledge in a way that would be available to everyone irrespective of time and place, namely via distance education.

The programme is run on the Internet (information, readings, exams, literature reviews), but also by using radio programmes that are available in cassettes and are broadcast by regional educational radios.

Workshop 2

II-A) Berufliche Schule der Hansestadt Rostock (Germany)

The **Technical College of Electrical Engineering and Electronics in Rostock** offers a range of courses, established on the basis of the German Dual System. Since 1998, the students there have had the opportunity to participate in creating and developing a real company that has marketed its own products, including a hardware dictionary on CD-ROM. Students get direct experience of applying their technical knowledge in a commercial environment.

II-B) Centre for Enterprise, Leicester (UK)

The **'Discovering Entrepreneurship' programme in the East Midlands of the UK** offers groups of between 15 – 20 undergraduates the opportunity to meet with 5 – 7 entrepreneurs in 10 three hour sessions, where the aim is specifically to inspire students by contrasting their ideas and experiences with those of the successful entrepreneurs.

II-C) Chamber of Commerce of Padova (Italy)

The Marco Polo project put in place by the Chamber of Commerce in Padova, in conjunction with the national, regional and local authorities, has introduced a range of instruments, involving in 1999 over half of the schools in the city and aimed at some 2200 students that were about to enter the labour market. Marco Polo 2 targeted 26 secondary schools, around 100 teachers, 2200 students and 478 enterprises. Based on courses intended to promote an enterprise culture, on business games and on work placements, as far as the students are concerned, the project has also engaged the active support of many of the region's enterprises making them more aware of the advantages of encouraging effective training of this sort. It also included the diffusion of enterprise culture amongst schoolteachers through training and placement in companies.

II-D) ASBL "Young Enterprise" (Belgium)

This association is part of a broader organisation "Young Enterprise" which exists in 106 countries. Its scope is to encourage students in the age of 16-25 years to develop entrepreneurial behaviour and skills. In Belgium, during the school year 1999/2000, 550 mini-enterprises have been started involving 6500 students. "Young Enterprise Belgium" has co-operated successfully for 15 years with a vocational training institute "Collège de la Fraternité" (a school which has 90 % of students of ethnic origin).

Students are encouraged to take an interest in entrepreneurial skills through special training modules, the creation of a mini-enterprise within the school and practical work placements in enterprises. This combination of entrepreneurship education and practice has proved to be an excellent basis for increasing their chances of finding a job.

II-E) IUT de Brest de l'Université de Bretagne Occidentale (France)

The University Institute of Technology (IUT) prepares students in the fields of banking and accounting, and also offers modules on training for entrepreneurship. In

1998, a special module called MA CREA was created to train students in developing an entrepreneurial spirit and to present a project focusing on the creation of an enterprise. The project is submitted to IUT and to MA CREA and to a group of students. If the project is considered to be convincing, partners of MA CREA (bankers, lawyers from the Chamber of Commerce, APCE the local agency for the creation of companies, and others) will support the project. Since 1998, some 15 new enterprises were created this way.

II-F) Instituto de Enseñanza secundaria “Clara de Rey” (Spain)

This institute of professional education has created a special module called the “Enterprise project” of which the objectives are: to encourage students to develop an entrepreneurial spirit, a sense of creativity and initiative, and to present a project to start a company (conduct a feasibility study, proposing a business plan, etc.). The students also gain practical experience, through contacts with the local business community. Currently, some 70 % of the students succeed in finding a job after having followed this course and between 5-10% have done so by starting their own enterprise.

Workshop 3

III-A) ESCP-EAP (France)

The presentation from **ESCP-EAP Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Paris** highlighted the obstacles faced by intrapreneurs both internally and externally and the need to focus not only on intrapreneurs but also on potential supporters of intrapreneurs (operational managers, acting as sponsors) and facilitators (key persons in the organisation able to create a corporate environment conducive to innovation and intrapreneurship).

III-B) France Telecom Development (France)

The presentation from **France Telecom** highlighted the strategy of France Telecom, which created in 1997 the School of Entrepreneurs. Candidates are recruited in-house amongst the staff and trained to start-up a company. After three years, 83 companies have been created.

III-C) Siemens (Germany)

The presentation from **Siemens** presented a strategy aiming at attracting, developing and retaining the best entrepreneurial talent in information technology, E-business, Telecommunications and Biotechnology. A training programme called ISMP (International Service Management Programme) targeting high executives has been developed. It combines management, entrepreneurial and personnel development elements in order to bind these high potentials to the company.

III-D) Training and Employment Authority (Ireland)

The presentation from **FAS** presented a human resource standard called “Excellence through People”. The purpose of this standard is to improve organisation performance through its most important resource - its people. It is also a structure, which focuses on the culture of an organisation and hence its concepts would assist organisations that wish to either introduce or strengthen a culture of intrapreneurship.

III-E) Associação Nacional dos jovens Empresarios – ANJE (Portugal)

The presentation focused on the activities developed by ANJE in favour of entrepreneurs. In 1997 an entrepreneur Academy was created with the objective of promoting entrepreneurship amongst young people.

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ANNEXE 2 Executive Summary of the Forum Workshops

The Nice/Sophia Antipolis forum was an occasion to exchange and discuss good practice in the context of three workshops.

In addition 3 keynote speakers made an intervention.

Mr. Fredrik Pitzner-Joergensen, entrepreneur from Carl Bro, highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship within his company. In order to cope with change and implement new projects, Carl Bro has set up an innovation centre and an incentive-reward system to stimulate entrepreneurship.

Mr. Catervo Cangiotti from Industria Pica Spa, Pesaro and formerly responsible for training in Confindustria emphasised the role of training in the new economy. Nowadays being an entrepreneur implies the ability to manage, stimulate and implement change. The school systems have a great responsibility for promoting values such as tolerance, team life, and a sense of responsibility.

Dr. Bert W. M. Twaalfhoven, entrepreneur and founding father of Growth Plus, underlined the importance of private funding to universities in the US. He highlighted the importance of entrepreneurs sharing their experience with students. To promote entrepreneurship high growth firms should be recognised and benefit from positive discrimination, risk-taking should be sustained over the long term, and incubators developed.

1) Workshop 1: From school to university: what teaching and learning strategies, what action to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit in young people?

The common objectives of the practices presented was to develop a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship, a better knowledge of the enterprise world and lastly to sustain business creation.

The six presentations identified common themes such as:

- Management skills;
- Entrepreneurship (i.e. the ability to size opportunities, to act concretely)
- Social skills (networking/ communication skills)
- Personal development (confidence building/ ambition/ adaptability).

Conclusions

Amongst the practical conclusions, two main points stood out:

- The need to train the teachers to promote entrepreneurship;
- The need to change teaching methods allowing pupils to develop their own experience, capabilities and creativity.

Consequently teachers and also administrative authorities within schools should be made aware of entrepreneurship. Furthermore, action should be taken to train them and even include in their initial training the ability to develop and nurture entrepreneurship projects within their schools or classrooms.

According to participants, it is essential to reinforce the co-operation between schools, enterprises and public authorities. Equally financial means to support this process should be made available. Scottish Enterprise has a comprehensive strategy to promote entrepreneurship through a range of projects adapted to the different age groups.

2) Workshop 2:How can vocational training favour entrepreneurial initiative?

The second workshop attempted to examine how traditional vocational training courses could be modified in order to assist students and trainees to think in a more entrepreneurial way. Rather than simply promoting the acquisition of technical knowledge, vocational training increasingly needs to encourage entrepreneurial skills and the ambition to become an entrepreneur.

All the cases suggested, albeit to varying degrees, that the key to promoting entrepreneurial initiative is in engaging the imagination of students, that is, in assisting them to think of developing their own business ideas, by showing them, at least in part, what it could be like to establish and run their own businesses. An important part of stimulating the imagination in this way is the process of turning students from being passive receivers of the knowledge imparted by their subject teachers to active and creative users of this knowledge.

Even traditional and highly structured training systems can apply innovative approaches to this aim of stimulating interest and demonstrating how it can be done.

Stimulating the desire to be entrepreneurial can sometimes be accomplished by inspiring students with the example of successful entrepreneurs.

Sometimes these projects can be attempted on a broader base, addressing the aspirations of a whole cohort of students in their own schools including a focus on school staff. This requires an important degree of co-ordination between education and training authorities, regional authorities and enterprises.

Conclusions

The interest of promoting the co-operation between stakeholders, which are not used to working together, was demonstrated. The Marco Polo case was particularly relevant in terms of the interaction between different players at regional level. The project has gained support from enterprises in the region since it proved its effectiveness in providing local business with a more skilled workforce.

With a focus on vocational education, this workshop was much related to the labour market. Though all the students following these projects will not eventually move to self-employment, these projects are effective in providing a better understanding of enterprise culture, in supplying students with skills for use for companies and in improving their knowledge of enterprise and entrepreneurship through practice.

Entrepreneurial training has also an impact in terms of the better integration of students into the labour market and improving the confidence of target groups with particular difficulties, as was demonstrated by the Belgian project “ASBL Young Enterprises” which had a positive impact on students from ethnic minorities.

3) Workshop 3: New management practice and the development of ‘intrapreneurship’

This workshop analysed how to promote « Intrapreneurship » i.e. entrepreneurship initiated within enterprises targeting managers or the workforce.

All cases suggest that to be innovative and cope with changes, enterprises have to develop strategies to generate in-house creativity and innovation. This implies in terms of Human Resources Management, a stronger focus on autonomy, risk-taking, reactivity and adaptability. The forms of intrapreneurship will vary from one enterprise to another in order to comply with an overall business strategy. Some companies promote independence and risk-taking in-house and try to retain their staff as in the case of Siemens, others will attempt to promote spin-off on related areas of activity and help their staff to create their own business e.g. France Telecom.

Conclusions

Whether mostly focused on managers or on the workforce in general, whether aiming to retain managers or leading to the creation of spin-offs, all these initiatives tried to help promote and boost creativity. They all recognised that encouraging initiative and responsibility in the workforce is an important way to stimulate competitiveness. The setting-up of an external environment conducive to change should thus be replicated inside enterprises.

However, participants emphasised the need to create an incentive-reward system allowing for the promotion of intrapreneurship within companies. If managers are invited to take greater risks, they should also reap the benefits of this change in their responsibilities.

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