

Policy Recommendations

Teaching entrepreneurship:
insights from Germany,
Cyprus, Ireland, Spain &
Greece



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02

POLICY AIM

The aim of this policy brief is to present how VET trainers and other stakeholders from Germany, Cyprus, Ireland, Spain & Greece view teaching entrepreneurship. The policy brief provides evidence-based policy and practice recommendations, as well as key messages to trainers as part of best practices and sharing experience.

KEY MESSAGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Problem: Teaching entrepreneurship is an ambitious process. Issues such as lack of motivation from VET trainers due to time and budgetary restrictions, limited student's participation, gap between theory and practice, as well as lack of practical tools are underlined as crucial.

Recommendation 1: Entrepreneurship should be taught in all disciplines; Social Sciences and Economics offer appropriate methodological tools.

Recommendation 2: Give incentive to the students in order to increase participation.

Recommendation 3: Include traineeships and real-life scenarios/projects to acquire on the job practical experience.

CONTEXT

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Teaching entrepreneurship is an ambitious process

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At present, VET educators and trainers, as well as other educational organisations or individuals face multiple challenges such as poor skills acquisition, limited use of digital tools, skills mismatches, and the quality and relevance of education. Additionally, VET educators, adult educators, and trainers are in need of tools and support in order to better engage and address the needs of young and the long-term unemployed adults, in particular concerning teaching entrepreneurship.

In this regard, an integrated entrepreneurship education that will not only provide theoretical knowledge but ensure learners, trainees and graduates develop an entrepreneurial mindset, through developing entrepreneurial skills, behaviours and attitudes and equipping them with the key competencies to enable them to enjoy an entrepreneurial career or engage in new venture creation, might be the way forward.



04

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The VETEntre project aims to empower VET educators to develop their entrepreneurial mindset and to make VET education more attractive across Europe. We conducted small-scaled qualitative research in the partner countries by interviewing VET trainers, professors and practitioners in entrepreneurship, and other relevant stakeholders.

The main objectives of the project are to:

- Build the entrepreneurial competencies of VET educators;
- Support VET educators to design programs and activities promoting the entrepreneurship mindset of learners;
- Promote entrepreneurship education through the use of alternative pedagogical resources and digital tools;
- Enhance the employability and entrepreneurial skills of VET students and graduates.

STUDY RESULTS, OPPORTUNITIES & IMPLICATIONS

- VET trainers agree on the need of teaching not only technical but also soft skills, which are important for entrepreneurship, such as: openness, flexibility, the ability to work in groups, emotional intelligence, resistance to stress, ability to solve conflicts, risk management, financial management, good organization, creativity and willingness to learn new skills.
- Leadership and support in resourcing entrepreneurship education across different subjects within Institutions is a challenging need. Social Sciences and Economics seem to be more relevant to the field.
- More research is needed on mapping the needs of professionals within the job market, also considering the national contexts and labour market characteristics.



06

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FOR VET TRAINERS & VET LEARNERS

“Support EU & national initiatives on teaching entrepreneurship”

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Recommendations for VET trainers

- Policy support on creation of CPD programmes for entrepreneurial education at national level offering appropriate assessment, validation and accreditation to encourage teachers to value and complete the training.
- Engage learners in real-business scenarios, including the creation and management of virtual enterprises and student enterprises (virtual and real) and let them grow within their project.
- Promote connection of the VET sector with business and industrial needs.
- Integrate social and soft skills in teaching entrepreneurship.

Recommendations for VET learners

- Don't terminate your studies for developing a start-up
- Greater exposure to real-life business and enterprise experiences through job shadowing initiatives, traineeships, work placements etc.
- Be open-minded and produce your own research on current market trends
- Explore MOOCs and other open access learning platforms. There is a variety of learning material provided by world-renowned universities, e.g. MIT OpenCourseware: <https://ocw.mit.edu/>

OPINION PIECES

“There should be a good balance between start-up support and research. There is the need to support more start-ups, but at the same time research should not be put aside. Ideally, research and policy should go together to influence politicians with the support of data add new value”.

“There is a lot to do in order to achieve our goals and making real change in VET entrepreneurship. But, with projects like this and other research activities, we could make an incredible impact and improve entrepreneurial education”.

LIMITATIONS

Current research is small-scaled, therefore should be treated with caution in terms of generalizability.





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