



EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

Entrepreneurship education on the increase

Brussels, 13 April 2012 – Entrepreneurship education is being increasingly promoted in most European countries, according to a new report published by the European Commission. Eight countries (Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Wales and the Flemish part of Belgium) have launched specific strategies to promote entrepreneurship education, while 13 others (Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey) include it as part of their national lifelong learning, youth or growth strategies. Half of European countries are engaged in a process of educational reforms which include the strengthening of entrepreneurship education. A total of 31 European countries and 5 regions were surveyed for the report, entitled “*Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe*”.

Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, said: “*Entrepreneurship education is a driver for future growth and will help us to inspire the entrepreneurs of tomorrow. If Europe wants to stay competitive, it must invest in its people, in their skills, in their ability to adapt and in their ability to innovate. This means that we need to encourage a real change of mind-set in Europe towards entrepreneurial attitudes and this starts by instilling a spirit of entrepreneurship from early education onwards.*”

The report shows that entrepreneurship education is explicitly recognised in the primary education curricula of two-thirds of the countries surveyed. While entrepreneurship is not taught as a separate subject in primary schools, half of the countries have defined learning outcomes which relate to entrepreneurial attitudes and skills such as sense of initiative, risk-taking and creativity.

In secondary education, half of the countries integrate entrepreneurship into compulsory subjects such as economics and social sciences. Two countries (Lithuania, Romania) teach entrepreneurship as a compulsory separate subject. Practical entrepreneurial skills are specified by four countries (Lithuania, Romania, Liechtenstein and Norway).

The report shows that a dozen countries support initiatives related to entrepreneurship education such as enhancing closer cooperation between education and business, and setting up small-scale firms run by students. However, specific teacher training in this area is available only in the Flemish Community of Belgium, Bulgaria and the Netherlands. Only one third of European countries provide central guidelines and teaching materials for entrepreneurship education.

Background

The European Union promotes entrepreneurship as a key factor for competitiveness and has highlighted the importance of advancing a European entrepreneurial culture by fostering the right mind-set and entrepreneurship-related skills.

The 2006 Recommendation of the European Parliament and Council on key competences for lifelong learning includes entrepreneurship as one of eight key competences ⁽¹⁾.

The need to improve the entrepreneurial and innovative capabilities of citizens is also underlined in three of the flagship initiatives in the Europe 2020 strategy for jobs and sustainable growth: "Innovation Union", "Youth on the Move" and "An agenda for new skills and jobs".

Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training is also a long-term objective for 'Education and Training 2020', the strategic framework for European cooperation ⁽²⁾.

As part of this, the Commission set up a working group on entrepreneurship education in November 2011. The group is made up of experts from 24 countries as well as representatives of business and unions. The aim is to support efforts by Member States to implement entrepreneurship education and to guide the Commission's work on promoting entrepreneurship education. The group will produce a policy handbook on entrepreneurship education before the end of 2013.

European Institute of Innovation and Technology

The [European Institute of Innovation and Technology](#) (EIT) places a strong emphasis on entrepreneurship and aims to educate the next generation of young entrepreneurs. It also encourages and supports individuals and companies in developing innovative ideas and taking them to the market. The first start-up companies created within the EIT's Knowledge and Innovation Communities were recently showcased at the first EIT Entrepreneurship Awards ([IP/12/160](#)).

Eurydice

The [Eurydice Network](#) provides information on and analyses of European education systems and policies. It consists of 37 national units based in all 33 countries participating in the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme (EU Member States, Croatia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey). It is co-ordinated and managed by the EU Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, which drafts its studies and provides a range of online resources.

For more information:

The full report, in English is available here: [Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe](#).

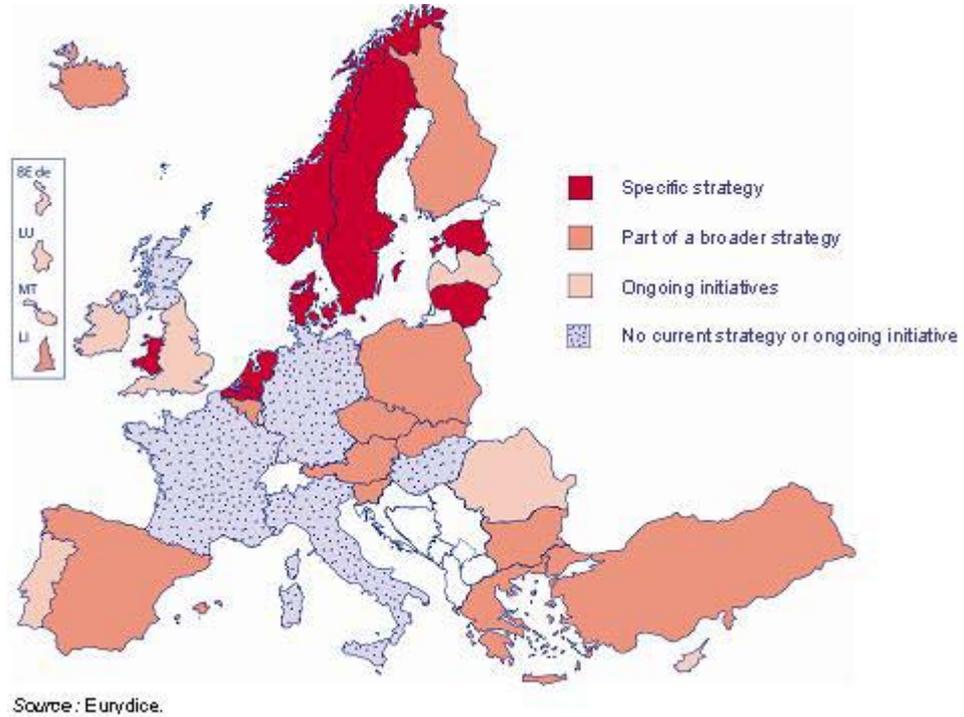
European Commission: [Education and training](#)

⁽¹⁾ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:0010:0018:en:PDF>

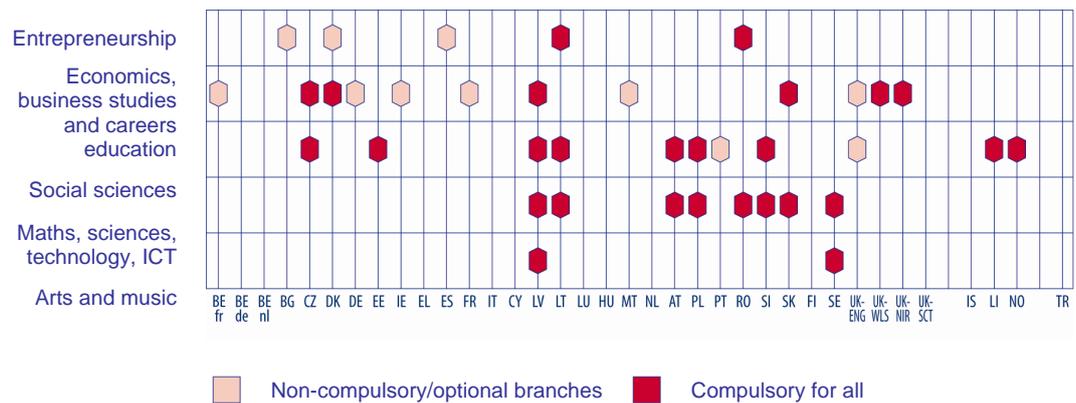
⁽²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc1120_en.htm

Annex

◆◆◆ Figure 1.2: National/regional strategies and initiatives to the implementation of entrepreneurship education into general education (ISCED 1-3), 2011/12



◆◆◆ Figure 2.3: Subjects integrating entrepreneurship education in general lower secondary education (ISCED 2), 2011/12

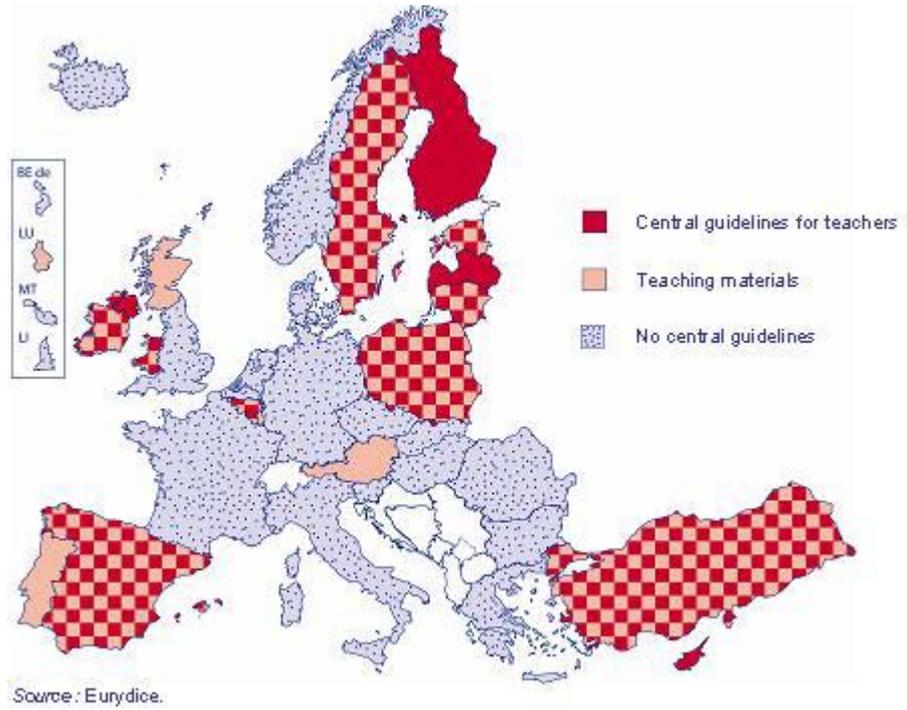


Source: Eurydice.

Country specific note

United Kingdom (UK-ENG): Enterprise Education is taught as part of Personal, Social and Health and Economic Education. This subject is not itself compulsory for schools to teach, but is taught in most schools and is then compulsory for pupils.

◆◆◆ Figure 3.3: Provision of central guidelines and materials for entrepreneurship education, 2011/12



Contacts :

[Dennis Abbott](#) (+32 2 295 92 58) ;

[Dina Avraam](#) (+32 2 295 96 67)

[Wim Vansteenkiste](#), Communication & Publications, Eurydice (+32 2 299 5058)

[Ania Bourgeois](#), author, Eurydice (+32 2 296 45 31)