Entrepreneurship education in the Netherlands

1 OVERVIEW

In 2008, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science in the Netherlands launched the Action Programme for Education and Entrepreneurship which is the main programme for entrepreneurship education at the national level. Although the plan was phased out in 2011, the objectives were to increase the number of educational institutions in the Netherlands that integrate entrepreneurship in their education policy, organisation and curriculum. In addition, the programme strived to increase the number of pupils and students with entrepreneurial mind-sets who wish to start their own business within five years after completion of their education. There are still some projects running post Action Programme.

Prior to this, a number of Dutch ministries including Economic, Affairs, Education, Culture and Science, as well as Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality promoted the idea of entrepreneurship in education, which resulted in development of Partnership Leren Ondernemen programme in 2005. Two outcomes of this programme were the Education and Entrepreneurship Action Programme (Actieprogramma Onderwijs en Ondernemen) and the Education Networks Enterprise (Onderwijs Netwerk Ondernemen). Through these initiatives educational institutions were supported with subsidy schemes for integrating entrepreneurship into their programmes and organisations.

Dutch schools have high levels of autonomy in setting up their curricula. Entrepreneurship education is thus not explicitly recognised as a compulsory part of curricula. There is however high demand for entrepreneurship education, because schools are subsidised to develop courses in cooperation with local businesses, higher education institutions, and other stakeholders. Entrepreneurship education focuses predominantly on vocational education where a large emphasis is put on developing specific entrepreneurial skills. Students at VET schools can choose an elective subject called “CE entrepreneurship (keuzedelen)”.

2 GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

Certificate Entrepreneurship

2.1 SUMMARY OF THE INITIATIVE

The Dutch government developed a variety of initiatives together with employers’ and employees’ organisations to help bring entrepreneurship into education. One of these initiatives was the Entrepreneurship Module eligible for Certification in upper secondary vocational education. The

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The content of this document, including the case studies and the descriptions of the initiatives reflect the information available as of August 2015.

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initiative was part of the Dutch National Action Plan 2011-2013, and based on the first three years of operation, it is currently under review. The Centre of Expertise on Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market for the Trade Sector (KCH) developed the module together with stakeholders. The module focuses on enabling students to become self-employed or a freelancer, and develops an entrepreneurial mindset.

2.2 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE

The objectives of the Entrepreneurship Module eligible for Certification are to support VET students in all sectors in gaining the necessary competences to become self-employed and developing an entrepreneurial mindset to become more employable. The module supports the development of seven competencies that bring about attributes such as individual responsibility, innovative abilities, effective work, social skills and a commercial mindset.

The Entrepreneurship Module consists of seven work processes. These processes describe the basic entrepreneurship package that an independent starting entrepreneur – usually without staff – will need in order to get his/her business up and running. The first three work processes are related to drafting a business plan and the entrepreneur's initial steps to actually start the business. The rest of the processes deal with maintaining and developing the business once it has started. The Entrepreneurship Module covers the following processes:

- Determining what the business will look like in the future
- Shaping the form of the business
- Regulating the financial aspects of starting a business
- Monitoring the financial position of the business
- Positioning and/or innovating the business
- Purchases products and/or services for the business
- Acquiring orders/clients, drafting quotations and/or negotiations

During these processes, it is vital for the entrepreneur to have a 'grip' on the business: controlling the figures, staying in contact with buyers and clients, and always thinking about how to improve the business. This is something that every entrepreneur must do to ensure the continuity and profitability of the business.

2.3 TARGET GROUP(S)

The target groups for the initiative are VET students. The Entrepreneurship Module is given in educational institutions which provide upper secondary vocational education.

2.4 ACHIEVEMENTS, RESULTS

In the academic year 2011/2012, Dutch VET-institutions offered the Entrepreneurship Module eligible for Certification as an elective subject. In the Netherlands, VET-students are required to take elective modules as part of their studies (NLOF level 3 and 4), but they can choose from a range of options. At the end of the module, students who went through the Entrepreneurship Module receive a certificate which shows they have successfully passed the module.

There were 16 pilot schools (VET-providers) engaged in the module between 2011-2013. This reached 1,600 students in the academic year 2011-2012, and around 2,000 the following year. The initiative has contributed to VET providers realising that entrepreneurship is a cross-sectoral topic. It also contributed to the embedding of entrepreneurship in the national qualifications framework.
3 EXAMPLES OF ON-GOING INITIATIVES ADDRESSING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

3.1 ENTREPRENASIUM

An innovative education programme for secondary schools, the Entreprenasium targets students who are interested in becoming entrepreneurs. This programme is implemented by the Foundation Entreprenasium and it is run on a voluntary basis through a network of organisations. The initiative envisages heavy involvement of teachers, because the teachers and students work together on a curriculum that is based on the needs of the students, offering a more flexible, personalised learning experience. Students have to show initiative and decide which are the classes necessary for their business. The school determines what is taught, but the students have the freedom to determine how that happens. Maintaining the quality of education is a must, and student need to pass all the exams and tests at school. The main benefit of the programme is that students can discuss the aims of the lessons with the teachers and make the courses more flexible to suit their own needs. The target group of the initiative are secondary school pupils and their teachers. The concept of Entreprenasium fosters the development of the so-called 21st century skills, such as creativity, teamwork and problem solving. 16 secondary schools offer the Entreprenasium programme. The evidence shows that most of the students who have participated in Entreprenasium have started a company during their secondary school studies.

3.2 JUNIOR COMPANY

Junior Company is a Dutch JA-YE initiative that aims at developing students’ team working skills through starting their own business. This initiative takes one school year and students go through five stages of development: start-up phase, business plan, sale of shares, buying and selling products and exit, concluding with a final report and financial settlements. Junior Company targets students at secondary schools and VET institutions. Students can get advice from professionals and/or volunteers with prior entrepreneurship experience. In 2013-2014, there were in total 1,284 Junior Companies created.

3.3 ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

Entrepreneurship education is a set of interactive courses for secondary school students. It was developed by a company called Codename Future. Young people (12-18 years old) meet monthly and discuss current social issues. In three stages the students get answers to questions such as who are you? What do you like? What can you do? In the first phase, they develop their own ideas, in the second phase they look at being enterprising and in the third phase they discover what entrepreneurship means for them and are invited to set up their own mini-company. There are also practical assignments included in which students can gain rewards. The main goal of the initiative is to empower students, and help them cooperate and create a network, to achieve goals, to become courageous, creative, flexible and have a market and customer oriented attitude. The courses are in line with the Dutch curricula.

3.4 ENTREPRENEURSHIP PASSPORT

Entrepreneurship passport is a certification tool that captures students’ knowledge and experience throughout their studies. It helps to inform teachers and future employers about the previous achievements of students. It aims to bridge the gap between education and the labour market. Entrepreneurship passport helps students to distinguish themselves from others and to showcase their entrepreneurial abilities. Every passport holder is assigned unlimited online data storage. Pupils
interested in having the passport can apply online at http://www.onder nemend.nu/algemene-informatie/thema/ondernemerschapspaspoort/contact.
### 3.5 Further Information and Contact Details on the Initiatives

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<th>Junior Company</th>
<th>Entreprenasium</th>
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<td>Codename Future</td>
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<td>Contact person</td>
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