Entrepreneurship education in Slovenia

1 OVERVIEW

Entrepreneurship education in Slovenia is mainly regulated through two policy documents, Slovenia’s Development Strategy and the Basic School Act. Both contain references to the development of the entrepreneurial spirit and knowledge, as well as to the need to establish a culture which supports effective action, innovation, creativity and risk taking. Underpinning the policy intentions, the launch of the UPI programme presented the first coordinated step of Slovenian policy makers towards a systematic approach on innovation and entrepreneurship education in 2009. Upon successful closure of the programme, its follow-up was commissioned by the Ministry of Economy and the SPIRIT project is working towards further improving teaching methods and measure their impact through participation of ten pilot schools.

National initiatives are complemented by an increasing number of bilateral and international initiatives implemented in the country, providing opportunities to both students and their teachers to engage in entrepreneurship education-related activities.

2 GOOD PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship club in primary schools

2.1 SUMMARY OF THE INITIATIVE

The Government of Slovenia funded and implemented a pilot extracurricular course called UPI (Ustvarjalnost, Podjetnost, Inovativnost), a creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship club in primary and secondary schools. The pilot ran from 2010-2012 through the "comprehensive programme to promote creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship of young people". It aimed to support the development of entrepreneurship and innovation through extracurricular courses delivered by mentors, specifically trained in entrepreneurship education. As part of the initiative, models were developed to measure levels of innovativeness, as well as to provide training in the field of innovation and creativity long-term.

2.2 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE

The launch of the UPI programme presented the first coordinated step of Slovenian policy makers towards a systematic approach on innovation and entrepreneurship education in 2009. The initiative was initiated and financed by the Ministry of the Economy of Slovenia and managed by the Public

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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.
Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investment (JAPTI which later became SPIRIT).

The programme aimed to support the development of the entrepreneurship spirit in the education system in Slovenia. UPI courses were designed to encourage students to explore creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship and to raise the pupils’ awareness on entrepreneurship.

Extracurricular UPI courses were implemented at primary and secondary schools by project partners. The activities of the programme included:

- The development of a model to assess the innovativeness of young people
- An analysis of existing tools and activities that promote creativity among young people
- Devising a sustainable long-term training model that address creativity and innovation
- Development of entrepreneurial projects supported by local entrepreneurs and businesses as well as researchers. The results were presented in regional events after the completion
- Organisation of capacity building activities for teachers and mentors

2.3 TARGET GROUP(S)

Between 2010 and 2012 35 primary schools and 52 secondary schools from eight different Slovenian regions participated in the programme. The activities engaged 1,135 primary school pupils, who participated in extracurricular courses that lasted 24 hours in total. In addition almost 100 courses were conducted at the schools, and over 80 business plans were developed within the project. The programme was implemented in primary schools, where the principals acknowledged its usefulness.

2.4 ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Project partners included the Slovenian Chamber of Craft and Small Businesses and a higher and vocational business education centre, the Gea College.

2.5 ACHIEVEMENTS, RESULTS

The measurement of impact was not part of the programmes initiative, however as part of a PhD research project (Halilović, 2013) an impact measurement was undertaken. The research evaluated the impact of the extracurricular UPI courses and entrepreneurship clubs on the creativity and flexibility of pupils in primary schools. Results showed a positive impact on creativity, flexibility and entrepreneurial skills of students, as well as effects on students’ decisions regarding their choice of secondary education. Moreover, the survey confirmed the establishment of a creative climate in the classroom. The measurement results prove an impact of entrepreneurship education on the individual and institutional level. A current follow up study was commissioned by the Ministry of Economy and SPIRIT is building on the UPI courses and trying to improve teaching methods will conduct impact measurement in 10 pilot schools.

2.6 LESSONS LEARNT

The success of the programme provided incentives for further projects to be initiated. However, it also highlighted the need for a comprehensive approach towards entrepreneurship education to ensure long-term effect and for the inclusion of all levels of the education system in the various programmes.
3 EXAMPLES OF ON-GOING INITIATIVES ADDRESSING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

3.1 ENTERYOUTH

EnterYOUTH was a bilateral entrepreneurship training project developed between partner organisations from Slovenia and Croatia. Project implementation in Slovenia was led by the Scientific Research Centre Bistra Ptuj. The main aim of the initiative was to promote and support the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by secondary and higher education students, but also young unemployed people, who intend to start a business at some point in their career. The project engaged local businesses and helped create new partnerships. The project received funding from the Instruments for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), as well as from the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology in Slovenia. The project run between 2014 and 2015, with a budget of € 221,179 and reached 200 young people.

3.2 COMPANY PROGRAMME

The Company Programme is one of the Junior Achievement Young Enterprise core programmes, recognised and implemented in many other countries across the EU. The Company Programme was first implemented in Slovenia between 2005 and 2008. However after a few years gap, it was re-launched again in the 2014-2015 school year. The aim of the programme is to help students form their own companies and discover how it works in real life. This includes electing a board of directors, raising funds and marketing a product or service. The educational part of the programme is based on learning-by-doing methods and involves challenges in various areas of business processes. The programme focuses on developing innovative ideas, social and presentational skills as well as a basic understanding of the market.

3.3 OUR COMMUNITY

Our Community is one another of the flagship programmes of Junior Achievement Young Enterprise. The programme targets pupils aged 8-10 years. The programme engages pupils through their participation in five lessons that were designed to be fun and interactive. The lessons are run by volunteers from local companies and businesses, which allows pupils to observe and learn how people in different positions work in companies and in teams. Participants can also learn about how different products are made, how important are state services to the community and about money flows.
3.4 Training for the Entrepreneurial-Hearted and the Brave

As a part of the Creative Entrepreneurship in Schools - CENTRES European programme, CEED Slovenia has been implementing a training programme that aims to cultivate and increase the entrepreneurial skills among secondary education students, as well as connect them in teams that share similar interests. The project has been running as a pilot, through a modular non-formal learning approach and including topics such as "Why am I an entrepreneur", "My ideas", "Different routes to goal" and "Day with mentors". The pilot target group included 2 schools, 60 pupils, 6 teachers, 20 industry representatives and an additional 200 pupils attended the networking event.
### 3.5 Further Information and Contact Details on the Initiatives

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<td>Contact person</td>
<td>Lidija Tusek</td>
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