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MARCH 2016

Entrepreneurship and education



European School
Heads Association

COLOPHON

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ABOUT ESHA ESHA is an Association that consists of 42 Associations of School Heads and Educational employers in 26 countries in primary, secondary and vocational education.

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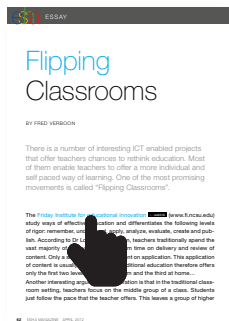
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Presentation to the EU Bully Conference

Safer Internet Day (SID) was celebrated throughout the world on Tuesday February 9th and this year the theme was “Play your part for a better internet” #SID2016. As part of SID events in Ireland I was asked to speak at the EU Bully conference which is striving to make a positive impact on the European public agenda from the perspective of the increasing phenomenon of cyber bullying and traditional bullying. This project spans organisations in Ireland, the United Kingdom, Greece and Romania. The conference was aimed at primary and secondary school Principals and Deputy Principals, Guidance Counsellors, parents, health workers, the media and indeed anybody interested in the subject of bullying and cyberbullying. The context of the conference was the fact that innocent pictures of hundreds of Irish girls had been harvested from social media sites without the owner’s knowledge or consent and have ended up on porn sites throughout the world.

I am one of many who believe that our lives have been enhanced by recent advancements in communications technology. Faster broadband, smarter phones and social media have facilitated more frequent contact between friends in distant places. It enables people to be more efficient at work and more productive in daily routines as information gets acquired within seconds. The internet will be at the heart of creating a better world. I'm in no doubt that social media and the technology in our pockets is a positive thing and should mostly be viewed as such. Technology is changing the face of education and will continue to positively enhance our education system in the decades ahead. The move to give tablets to students is recognising the power of technology and when the use of technology expands in our system (as it will) we have to empower our young people with the skills to make safe and responsible choices in their on-line world. A decade ago the future of education lay in technology but today, many technology companies are scratching their heads and asking why the technological revolution in the classrooms hasn't taken off to the extent imagined.



With all its wonders there are some significant downsides to such technological advancement and greater connectivity in society. That being cyberbullying. It has been a scourge in our schools for the past few years and despite high profile anti-bullying campaigns and tragedies arising from this issue, the problem is not going away.

The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals in Ireland decided to conduct research on the issue and published its first national survey on cyberbullying in February 2013. Market research Company, Amárach surveyed both adults and teenagers of their views and experience of cyberbullying. Follow-up surveys were conducted in 2014 and 2015. Findings show that 1 in 6 students claim to have been victims of cyberbullying. The number of students admitting to bullying another student went up from 5 percent to 9 percent but there is a clear disconnect between the parents views and that of their children. For example, 10% of parents in the 2015 survey said their child had been cyber bullied (in 2013 the figure was 18%) but in the last survey only 4% of parents said that their child was a cyber bully which was down from 12% in 2013.



The fact that more students were aware that they are involved in cyberbullying and willing to admit it, might be a positive development, at least to the extent that awareness of the problem is an important first step in tackling the problem.

The NAPD survey also probed the issue of responsibility and cyber bullying. When asked who is responsible for dealing with cyber bullies, 34% of people believe it is the responsibility of the bully's parents, more than any other group. 23% say it is the parents of the victims that are responsible for dealing with cyber bullies. 14% say it's the actual victim who should deal with the cyber bully. 25% say that school teachers and principals are responsible for dealing with the issue.

There is no doubt that schools have to do their part to tackle this problem because, as we know, schools can solve all of society's ills. Of those surveyed, three quarters believe that schools must advise children on safe internet practices and 7 out of 10 think schools should ban smart phones from classroom. 63% of people think there should be a ban on social media usage in schools altogether. In our last survey, 46% of parents monitored their child's internet use, down from 54% the previous year. Worryingly, 30% checked less than once a month or never. 73% want schools to produce useful guidelines on cyberbullying. Schools have a definite role to play in advising on safe and responsible internet practices but it is unrealistic to suggest that schools would or should ban smart phones.

WHAT CAN YOU AS A SCHOOL LEADERS DO?

So what can school leaders do to tackle a problem? It's a challenge because most cyberbullying occurs beyond the grounds of our schools. While some might be tempted to argue that bullying in some form has always featured in our schools and playgrounds, cyber bullying is different and I would argue, much more pervasive because

social media allows the bullying to follow the student beyond the school gates and into their homes and bedrooms. This is new and relentless for the person subject to bullying. School leaders must act on cyberbullying because of the devastating impact it has on the morale of students. A positive school climate, where students feel that they have a say and an input to policy development, where there

Many principals and educators are not as tech savvy as their students, which means they would be somewhat behind the curve when it comes to understanding it

is a culture of respect and tolerance, a supportive environment where the achievements of all are celebrated, where there is a culture of dialogue between staff and students, is a school climate where cyberbullying is less likely to occur. A student body that is low on morale is one which eats away and poisons the atmosphere in our schools. Declining morale in schools effects everything from classroom discipline to staff-student relations to participation in extra-curricular and to academic achievement. Inaction is no longer an option. The stakes are too high for this issue to simply be ignored and

we owe it to our teachers, school managers, parents and ultimately the students to tackle on this scourge head on and there are a number of things that can be done to stem the tide of cyberbullying among young adults.

First and foremost, school leaders must have the courage to act on this issue. Very little happens in our schools without somebody

getting to hear about it – and in schools with a positive climate that tends to happen sooner rather than later. Often the dilemma for the school leader is, what do I know and what do I know officially. It is not easy, but then again stopping bullying never is easy. There is no silver-bullet or quick fix solution to stop cyberbullying. It requires a collective effort from school stakeholders and commitment from school leaders.

So where do we start? Firstly it is important for principals to know what cyberbullying actually is – unwanted negative behaviour carried out using the internet, mobile phones or other types of electronic devices. Knowing how to spot it, is the challenge. Many principals and educators are not as tech savvy as their students, which means they would be somewhat behind the curve when it comes to understanding it. School principals have to embrace modern technology. I believe technology is not as mysterious as before so knowing about Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snap Chat is a start. Research these sites and see how quickly and how easy it is to post offensive material online. Principals and teachers, just like parents are probably much less clued in than their tech savvy students or children. Incidentally, 73% of parents in the Irish survey believe that their son or daughter will be more likely to be bullied on Facebook, 37% on Snapchat and 32% on Twitter.

The notion that the teacher is at the top of the class telling the students what notes to write down is long past. Collaborative teaching and learning, learning by discovery is at the heart of curriculum reform in many ESHA member associations and often now involves students sharing information with the teacher, being ahead of the teacher in many ways in a classroom setting that is non-threatening but collaborative.

WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING?

Cyberbullying, unlike physical bullying doesn't require face-to-face contact and isn't limited to just a handful of witnesses in the school yard. Gone are the days when bullies were exclusively the brutish physical alphas in the classroom. Low self-esteem, family difficulty or insecurity, a way to express anger, fear and anxiety are issues for all bullies. Cyber bullies come in all shapes and sizes. Basically anyone with an internet connection or mobile phone can cyber bully someone else, often without having to reveal their true identity. Cyber bullies can torment their victims 24 hours a day and the bullying can follow the victim anywhere so that no place, not even home, ever feels safe, and with a few clicks the humiliation can be witnessed by hundreds or even thousands of people online.

Colleagues tell me that one of the main challenges that school principals face is managing the unrealistic expectations of parents on how



to tackle this problem. It is reasonable, natural even, for a parent to defend their child against allegations of bullying but as the leader of a school community it is very disappointing when parents refuse to accept that their child could conceivably be involved in such behaviour. No more than remaining calm and avoiding over-reacting when talking to the child relating to bullying, it's important that parents remain calm when talking to the principal who is trying to resolve a complex situation in what will be a win:win situation. Teenagers behave differently depending on whom they're with, whether it is siblings, peers, teachers or other adults. Parents and schools need to work together to teach teenagers that their interactions with others can result in the other person being mistreated and to emphasise that their actions may cause hurt or upset to another person. Parents need to understand that, unlike traditional forms of bullying, cyberbullying does not start or end at the school gates. It follows a child home where most instances of cyberbullying occur. This makes it quite a challenge for educators and school leaders to monitor. It is vital that principals inform parents of the nature of cyberbullying and that tackling it be a joint effort between parents, teachers, principals and indeed students alike.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

NAPD's recent research into cyberbullying in Ireland found that 77 percent of parents believe they have their part to play in monitoring a child's online behaviour and interactions, although only 26 percent of parents monitor their children's activities online on a daily basis. I suspect the monitoring was with a younger age group. Parents should be encouraged to be mindful of their children's online activity whilst respecting a certain perimeter of privacy as well. The appropriate level will of course depend on the age of the child. It is not an easy task but there is no easier way of knowing your child's activities online.

Effective communication with parents is crucial to handling this issue. Raising awareness with parents of first year students would be a prudent first step. Educating parents about what cyberbullying is and the negative impact it can have on a person's mental and emotional well-being should be central to the information parents receive as their son or daughter is moving from primary to post-primary school. Parents should be given detailed information about how to approach the school if they have concerns that their child is being cyber bullied. Parents should be briefed about what they can expect from the school if their child is a victim or a perpetrator. They should also be advised on what steps to take if they feel that their concern isn't being properly or speedily addressed. I believe that it is also wise to educate parents on how to spot cyberbullying when their child or children are at home. We know that children are often reluctant to tell parents about it because they fear that it would curtail their internet access. This is why I advise parents monitor a child's online activity, especially considering the amount of inappropriate content that is easily available online. However I would stress not threatening to withdraw access to a child or else they will never reveal any instances of online abuse.

Children of a certain age are often reluctant to tell parents or teachers about such problems. I would propose that schools provide material to educate parents about spotting the various warning signs that their children might be the victims of cyberbullying. In primary school parents routinely talk to their children about their day in school. This is less common at secondary and often the response is by way of an unintelligible grunt, but parents who communicate on a daily basis with their children about their experience that day in school are more likely to notice any changes in mood or attitude.

Schools must also advise on how to stop cyberbullying before it starts. Such activities could include teaching children to not reply,

keep the message, tell someone you trust block the sender and report the problem to the people who can do something about it. Students should be taught not to share passwords or personal information online and not to post anything online that they wouldn't want a class mate to see. It's important to underline the reality of permanence of online posts. Parents must be encouraged to monitor online activity of their children. This can be done by limiting data access on children's smart phones, keeping your PC in a busy area of the home, insist on knowing your children's passwords, know who your child is communicating with and to encourage children to tell parents if they have received an abusive message.

The key role that school leaders must play is to foster a climate of respect for fellow students. Principals must take a leading role in promoting the wrongs of cyberbullying by making it against school policy, make it a punishable offence and draw attention to the consequences of being caught.

Many of the perpetrators of cyberbullying can be oblivious to the harmful outcomes of cyberbullying. It is important to understand that there are serious consequences to posting offensive material, posting comments and even 'liking' such posts and comments on Facebook. It might just be a split second action, but such actions can have a devastating effect on the victim.

If there is one positive element about cyberbullying it's that it can be traced easily. Although the permanency of online bullying makes it one of the worst forms of abuse, the online evidence can be used

The key role that school leaders must play is to foster a climate of respect for fellow students

to source, prosecute and punish the transgressors of cyberbullying. School guides should be made available to students on how to respond to cyberbullying. This can be done by saving the evidence of abusive texts or a screenshots of webpages and then reporting them to a teacher or parent. The evidence gathered can make it easy for schools to identify perpetrators and punish them accordingly. Granted, many transgressors of cyberbullying are anonymous online, but technology can trace phones and IP addresses. For better or for worse there are always ways to track a person's actions on line. This could require investment on the part of the school but I believe that it is a small price to pay to protect the well-being of a student and to preserve the collective morale of the school.

I like many of you accept that part of growing up is dealing with conflict, differences, acceptance and approval. These are the realities that all of us had to face as teenagers and it's something that all young adults have to face. Part of growing up is dealing with differences between people. However no person deserves to be subject to vile abuse online or otherwise. If there is a chance that we as school leaders can prevent some of this abuse from happening to our students then it's worth it.

We owe it to our students and to the integrity of our profession to do our utmost to curb this crisis within our schools. It is a crisis that we must face head on. Parents, teachers and the victims of cyberbullying will look to school principals to lead the charge against cyberbullying.

By educating ourselves we can best communicate the realities of this problem to students and parents through education seminars, literature and school policy dealing with cyberbullying. The social media companies are beginning to cooperate and take down objectionable posts earlier. Once those elements are in place it will foster an environment of respect and tolerance in our schools. Such an environment will empower victims to properly handle online abuse

and ultimately report such activities to the proper school authorities. It is a collective effort that must start and be led by school principals because when the situation gets out of hand the poor principal is usually in an impossible position trying to deal with expectations from parents that the perpetrator will be expelled. Restorative justice doesn't readily come to mind although experience shows that it is often the most effective way of bringing about a win:win situation. The rewards of successfully reducing the occurrences of cyberbullying are well worth striving for. A boost in school morale, along with a reduction in student-teacher tensions and a greater focus on school work is something that will benefit us all. ■



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EU BULLY Project

The EU BULLY project, funded by DG JUSTICE, has been developed to support teachers to address bullying with young people in schools, youth groups etc. The project intends to make a difference within the education system in the UK, Ireland, Greece and Romania through:

- ▶ better trained teachers and support staff to address bullying in all its forms
- ▶ better trained staff to support young people and their parents, carers, guardians and wider family and friends networks to address bullying
- ▶ greater confidence in using drama techniques at school in and outside of the classroom to create safe places to discuss bullying and other contentious issues
- ▶ offering greater flexibility for teachers to use apps developed for mobile technologies
- ▶ improving the content of anti-bullying programmes on offer in schools
- ▶ improved knowledge of the frequency of cyber bullying taking place
- ▶ reducing the disparity in knowledge, skills and understanding between countries in the partnership in regard to bullying and its impact

Drama sessions and support for teachers in all partner countries are complemented by a specially developed play and a video of the play, to be released soon. In addition teachers can utilise the EU BULLY Quiz and Research survey in their lessons as resources to support their anti-bullying approach.

I Say
NO to
Bullying!!



EU BULLY QUIZ APP

The app enables people of all ages to learn virtually about bullying. The EU BULLY quiz tests understanding about what types of bullying take place, challenges attitudes to bullying scenarios and how to stay safe online. Users can be self-directed, peer-directed (via competitive challenges) or teacher-directed. This means that teachers and students have a high degree of flexibility in terms of utilising the game in class or outside school. The 24 hour unrestricted access to content enables the quiz to also be picked up by young people on their own accord, to test their knowledge and reconsider their attitudes towards bullying, and roles of victims, bystanders and bullies.

The EUBULLY Quiz is available at <http://zammer.co> – registration required.

EU BULLY RESEARCH SURVEY APP

This research app is another simple, quick activity that can enhance an anti-bullying activity. It also offers young people the opportunity to contribute to a European wide research project that highlights the scope and nature of cyberbullying today. This resource can be used by children from 8 years and above. The research survey app is accessible online and can be downloaded as an app on to iOS and Android devices. This research tool enables young people affected by bullying to speak up about their experiences in the safety of anonymity; the data collected is completely anonymous and is stored in a protected database. The number of bullying incidents online are then reported through a database, and is published on the EU BULLY site, giving real time data on how widespread bullying is across Europe.

The Research survey can be found at <http://eubully.eu/research-quiz/> and is also available to download on the AppStore and Google Play.

WWW.EUBULLY.EU

Agenda 2016

MARCH 2016

18th AVS Annual Conference, Nieuwegein, The Netherlands

APRIL 2016

8th – 9th ESHA GA meeting, Ljubljana, Slovenia

20th – 22nd International School leadership training in Oslo, Norway, Module 1 and 2 (Module 3 is available online)
www.internationalschoolleadership.com

OCTOBER 2016

4th – 5th International School leadership training in Oslo, Norway, Module 4 and 5

18th ESHA GA meeting, Maastricht, The Netherlands

19th – 21st ESHA biennial Conference Maastricht, The Netherlands

OCTOBER 2017

23rd – 25th 4th Regional Conference in South Eastern Europe, Ljubljana, Slovenia

The ESHA 2016 Biennial Conference in Maastricht

International Inspiration in Education Leadership matters

From October 19th to 21st of 2016 the Dutch school leader association AVS will organize the ESHA biennial conference in Maastricht, The Netherlands.

The event will offer inspiring key notes speeches, informative and interactive tracks, opportunities to meet likeminded colleagues in the beautiful town of Maastricht.

At the conference, leading keynote speakers like Michael Fullan, Daan Roosegaarde and Zackary Walker will address important school leadership issues. During the tracks in the afternoon and in the theme cafes, you will be able to discuss and share your ideas with likeminded colleagues. You will be able to meet with hundreds of School leaders from 28 different European countries.



The Interactive tracks cover the following themes:

- Dream of the future: 21st century pedagogies
- Inspire and Innovate: 21st century leadership
- Global citizenship: 21st century competences
- Wellbeing for 21st century kids

The conference will be held in historic Maastricht in the South of the Netherlands. Maastricht is well known as the European city of the Netherlands where German and Latin cultures meet. It is located in the lovely hills of Limburg in the heart of the Euregio where 4 million people are living in 3 different countries, speaking 4 different languages. A lively city with an international university that attracts students from all over the world. At this international conference on Educational Leadership, school leaders from (pre)primary, secondary and vocational education will meet to exchange knowledge and experiences. The main conference location is the beautiful historic 'Theater at the Vrijthof' in Maastricht.

Please sign up via www.esha2016.com.

Here you can find all details of the program and accommodation.

We are looking forward to meeting you in person in Maastricht.

Petra van Haren, President of AVS, the Dutch School Heads Association and
Clive Byrne, President of ESHA, Director NAPD, Ireland

Children's early learning – ensuring a strong and equitable start

Children's learning in their early years has long-lasting impacts on their later educational attainment, employment, income, physical and mental health, self-reported happiness and civic engagement.¹ The benefits of strong early learning amongst children are clearly evident at school entry, at the end of compulsory schooling and later in adulthood. Conversely, when children do not develop critical early skills, they face enormous challenges in achieving well at school and in having positive life outcomes across a range of domains.

BY ROWENA PHAIR, OECD, PARIS

¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (Forthcoming) *The Power and Potential of Early Learning*.



The strength of children's early learning is predominantly determined by the child's home environment. This early development can be enhanced through programmes that target parents, as well as through the provision of high quality early childhood education and care (ECEC). Both types of interventions can particularly benefit disadvantaged children, including children from migrant and refugee families.

WHAT EARLY LEARNING MATTERS MOST?

The early learning that matters most for children is a balance of both social and emotional skills and cognitive skills². The critical social and emotional skills include the development of self-regulation, locus of control and social skills, notably trust and empathy. Self-regulation incorporates attention, delay of gratification and self-control. The critical early cognitive skills are the development of language and communication skills, early numeracy and fine motor skills.

2 Ibid.

SO WON'T INCREASING PARTICIPATION IN ECEC IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN?

Participation rates in ECEC have risen across many countries over recent years. Amongst OECD countries, enrolment rates in ECEC rose from 52% of 3-year-olds in 2005 to 72% in 2013, and from 69% of 4-year-olds in 2005 to 85% in 2013³. These increases in participation have occurred alongside corresponding increases in public and private expenditure on ECEC.

The benefits of attending ECEC are evident in PISA⁴, although these are highly variable across countries. In some countries, participation in ECEC does not confer demonstrated benefits in comparison with children who do not attend ECEC.

In addition, as ECEC enrolment rates have increased, the impacts on later PISA scores for the same cohort of students have not been notable, as illustrated in the graph below. In some countries, such as Japan, increased ECEC enrolment rates are positively associated with improved PISA scores. In countries such as Australia, however, increased ECEC participation has been accompanied by a decline in PISA scores.

The evidence on what ECEC participation and provision relate to better child outcomes is unclear. The relationship between structural aspects, such as group size and children's development has been found to be weak, and even factors such teacher qualifications do not always show a clear relationship with children's development⁵

3 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2015). Education at a Glance 2015 OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris.

4 PISA is the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment, a comparison of the skills of 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science.

5 Bradshaw, P., Lewis, G. and Hughes, T. (2014). Growing Up in Scotland: Characteristics of pre-school provision and their association with child outcomes, Scottish Government; Gialamas, A., Mittinty, M.N., Sawyer, M.G., Zubrick, S.R., Lynch, J. (2014) Child Care Quality and Children's Cognitive and Socio-emotional Development: an Australian Longitudinal

While process quality is undoubtedly key, there is little evidence on the nature of participation and provision that work best for particular groups of children.

SO HOW CAN WE ENSURE CHILDREN DO HAVE A STRONG AND EQUITABLE EARLY START?

To help children achieve the best possible early start, countries need some measure of their children's early skills. Countries will be able to fast-track improvements, at a system-wide level and for particular groups of children, if they can learn from the experiences and successes of other countries, and if they can monitor the performance of their early learning system over time. No mechanism currently exists for countries to do this.

To address this gap and to assist countries to better support children's early learning, the OECD is developing a new programme on Early Learning, in conjunction with interested countries. This programme will include:

- ▶ An assessment of children's early learning, across the critical social and emotional skills and cognitive skills that determine children's later success. The assessment is likely to include input from parents and teachers, as well as assessment by independent and trained early learning assessors.
- ▶ Information on the child's home environment. This will include information on parents' education levels and socio-economic status. It will also include information on the learning activities undertaken by parents with the child and the parents' views on early learning, including their engagement with ECEC.

Study. *Early Development and Care* 184; Mashburn, A., Pianta, R., Hamre, B., Downer, J., Barbarin, O., Bryant, D., Burchinal, M., Early, D. and Howes, C. (2008) "Measures of Classroom Quality in Prekindergarten and Children's Development of Academic Language and Social Skills". *Child Development* 79(3).

- The ECEC participation histories of each child. This would include the child's age at entry to ECEC and the intensity, duration and continuity of the child's participation in ECEC. It would also include the type of ECEC provision the child has participated in, and the characteristics of such provision.

Thus, the above information will help countries to better understand children's early learning and how well children's needs are being served. It will help countries to see what other countries are achieving, what is possible to achieve and where improvements in their own systems could be made. Such improvements may relate to parent programmes, to ECEC participation patterns and provision, and to the focus and priorities in early schooling.

The information from this programme will assist countries to better help particular groups of children, to lift the performance of their education systems as a whole and to monitor progress over time. Countries that improve the early learning experiences of their children will reap benefits in more educated, productive and satisfied citizens and in improved equity of outcomes.

WHEN DOES THE EARLY LEARNING STUDY COMMENCE?

Preparatory work has begun on the Early Learning study and a number of countries participated in meetings in 2015 to shape the study. A call-for-tender was released in December 2015, inviting international contractors to put forward proposals to finalise the design of the study and to pilot the study in a selection of countries. The successful contractor will start work in the first half of 2016.

During 2016 and 2017 the study will be fully developed and tested. The pilot study will run in 2018.

Countries are currently being asked if they wish to participate in the pilot study. Participating in the pilot will ensure that from the outset the design of the study is well-aligned to each participating country's priorities and systems. Participation will also provide countries with benchmark information on their children's early skills, the views of parents and education practitioners, as well as "quick wins" for improvement – for the education system as a whole and, most importantly, for the next cohort of early learners. ■

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE EARLY LEARNING STUDY

To find out more about the Early Learning study, please contact Rowena Phair, Project Leader (rowena.phair@oecd.org).

The New Learning re-invented?

‘Entrepreneurial Learning’ has been in the spotlight in recent years. In this article, the principles of entrepreneurial learning will be explained in greater detail, placed in a broader context and associated with the current insights on teaching and learning. ‘Entrepreneurial learning’ could contribute to the modernization of existing education given the developments in our society. Secondary schools which practice ‘entrepreneurial learning’ under the name ‘Entreprenasium’ can serve as an example.

DR. LEO LENSSEN, THE NETHERLANDS

HISTORY

In 1600 Simon Stevin presented the curriculum for the 'Duytsce Mathematycque', the new school of engineering at the University of Leiden. Stevin became well known for his demand to teach in the Dutch language. Until then, university education was solely given in Latin. Stevin understood that suitable candidate engineers would not get inside the gates of his new school if he taught exclusively in Latin or French. He also knew that practical skills and individual attention were more important than mere transmission of theoretical knowledge. Accessibility was more important than standing, especially where the national interest was at stake. With the establishment of the 'Duytsce Mathematycque' Stevin introduced the first practical oriented training at university level in the Netherlands and together with it the schism that to this day dominates the Dutch education system: the status related distinction between general education and vocational education alongside the debate about the role of cognitive knowledge.



The strong emphasis on knowledge and individual subjects has resulted in less attention to practical skills and personal development of learners in the Dutch education system. The focus on competences has predominantly led to fierce resistance from society and education. They fear that one of the icons of that education system, the central review will become less relevant. The central review seeks to measure the intellectual achievements of individuals independently and objectively on the basis of an absolute standard. This is the reason that the content and form of the assessment (i.e. the exam)

dominates the curriculum to a large extent. Furthermore, the status of the diploma influences the individual's social position and is regarded as a selection tool on the labour market.

The 'new' thinking about teaching and learning: 'I do, so therefore I become.'

The 'new' thinking about teaching and learning: 'I do, so therefore I become.'

Monique Volman should be credited for her objective reasoning to a new pedagogical approach

which became known as the New Learning about ten years ago. This approach was ridiculed in public debates because of lack of scientific evidence. Volman rightly argued that traditional learning is not based on scientific research either.

The essential question is what criteria are applied to measure educational outcomes. Until those are determined by the traditional exam, the answer is obvious. Therefore, it is essential to examine whether traditional education can stand the test of the new Pisa criteria.



In her contribution Volman is clear that the principles of the New Learning is worth the effort of rethinking, given the need to connect Dutch education to the demands of the future. She thereby mentions the importance of the '21st century skills'. Thinking in terms of “competences” puts the different approaches mentioned above, between knowledge and practical skills in a new perspective. Competencies form the connection between the individual qualities and aspirations of the individual, the development of practical (professional) skills and the required (theoretical) knowledge.

In recent literature, three main streams of education approaches are distinguished. They complement each other, reinforce each other, form a coherent whole and constitute a meaningful contribution to the answer to the question of how education in the Netherlands could be future-proofed.

These themes are:

- ▶ The collection of insights into the role of non-cognitive characteristics of (young) people related to school success and subsequent life and career. The book that has had a great impact in this regard is 'How Children Succeed' by Paul Tough. The subtitle is telling: 'confidence, curiosity and the hidden power of character'.
- ▶ The international developments in society and in the labour market, with themes such as job insecurity, flexibility, adaptation and 'lifelong learning' play a prominent role. A very important signal in this respect is the contribution of Andreas Schleicher (OECD) in the ESHA-magazine of October 2015 'Innovations in Pisa to Assess a wider range of skills.'

This article shows that the existing Pisa test is no longer in line with social developments and a change must be made. He himself summarizes as follows: 'the world no longer rewards people just for 'What they know' but for 'What they can do with What they know'. In short: 'I do, so therefore I am', instead of 'I think, therefore I am'.

- ▶ The knowledge of how the brain of young people works and the understanding of the neurological-psychological developments that co-determine their development. The recently published study 'The boys against the girls' gives an overview of projecting and understanding of relevant studies on the brain and neuropsychological development in the (late) adolescence. (*Research study Maastricht 2015*)

Tough's book convincingly shows that personal characteristics are of greater impact on school performance and success in future careers than cognitive performance. Equally interesting is the fact that these personal characteristics can be developed structurally and prolonged by constantly working on them. So you can work on the personal character of the adolescent. It is about the big five:

‘self-confidence, creativity, optimism, curiosity, perseverance’. The combination of these features ensures that students have ‘grit’: courage, ambition and resilience.

A meta-study conducted by Maastricht’s education economists for the Dutch government in 2015 concludes that investment in personal development improves socio-economic outcomes.

The researchers show that tests that only measure cognitive skills do not sufficiently assess the development of pupils and their future opportunities. The non-cognitive skills make an important contribution to explaining social and economic outcome differences. Reinforcements of education in this field must be seen as an integral part of the school curriculum.

The new Pisa test, to be introduced in 2018, will consist of an assessment based on four key dimensions:

- ▶ Communication and relation management
- ▶ Knowledge of and interest in international developments, challenges and trends
- ▶ Responsiveness and flexibility
- ▶ Mental strength and resistance

Interestingly, the focus on the individual development of the student is not in a modernist manner, but it is explicitly in the context of orientation of the world.

TNO (*Dutch Research Organisation for Technique and Science*) researched how two different industries, the high-tech sector and healthcare, tried to keep the knowledge and skills of their employees up-to-date in a turbulent environment. In addition to subject-specific (technical or medical) competencies, soft skills become increasingly more important: social and communication skills, flexibility, initiative taking, collaboration and keeping an overview.

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING

How does the above relate to ‘entrepreneurial learning’? Is this another hype, or is it a substantial and sustainable vision of learning and teaching? Entrepreneurial learning may become a container for all kinds of more or less similar educational practices and visions, as The New Learning did before. By interchangeably using the parlance of the notions of ‘entrepreneurship education’, ‘entrepreneurial schools’ and ‘entrepreneurial learning’ reinforces the confusion. Schools that call themselves enterprising, are not necessarily supporters of entrepreneurial learning. Sometimes they are describing a characteristic of the school rather culture than the pedagogical vision, although they are not mutually exclusive.

As said ‘entrepreneurial learning’ is a pedagogical-didactic concept that is not always consistently defined and therefore becomes vague. This probably has contributed to the way ‘entrepreneurial learning’ in secondary education has often manifested itself into: setting up a mini-company by the students, as was often the case in the first few Entreprenasium schools in secondary education. It is also the reason that most Entreprenasium schools have chosen for a more fundamental approach in the last two years.

The essence of this approach is to put competences at the heart of ‘entrepreneurial learning’. Thereby avoiding the disastrous ‘knowledge versus skills debate’ and realizing the adage ‘student-centred’: competency development is, after all individual-related and not only depending on (external) curriculum requirements. Because of that choice – for secondary education – it is also possible to include regular cognition-oriented programs: knowledge is an integral part of the competences to be acquired. Therefore one of the main assignments of the Entreprenasium schools became

clear: the development of an approach in which the individual student-oriented competency model and the traditional program can be integrated. The competencies formulated by these schools are based on internationally (OECD) developed standards, but focused on pedagogical theory. At the same time schools have embedded the characteristics of 'entrepreneurial learning' in their basic educational practice to the extent that it can be implemented in the school in a concrete, sustainable and high quality manner.

VISION

'Entrepreneurial learning' is based on the principle that the (young) person learns by being adventurous, investigative, critical and by being open to the world around him or her and considers his her own life as a 'company' in the metaphorical sense.

COMPETENCES

The Entreprenasium approach is based upon ten competences which are divided into three main areas: knowledge, skills and attitude. It involves the following competences and factors:

Knowledge:

- ▶ Knowledge and understanding; involving the personal situation, characteristics and views.
- ▶ General economic principles; functioning of the financial/economic system; – establishment society; role citizen/government.
- ▶ Organization of higher education; issues by choice; labour market developments.
- ▶ Ethical principles and choices; sustainability issues; social responsibility.

Skills:

interpersonal, learning / development skills, analytical and organizational skills.

- ▶ Collaborate, communicate, act with integrity, establish relations, listening.
- ▶ Investigate, self-reflect, adaptive and responsive, relevant (professional) knowledge acquisition / tracking.
- ▶ Planning and organizing, prioritizing, goal setting, leadership
- ▶ Analysing and interpreting situations, evaluate, judge and decide.

Attitude:

- ▶ Personality, ambition, enterprising.
- ▶ Self-confidence, curiosity, creativity, resilience (I am, therefore I create).
- ▶ Motivation, perseverance, taking initiative, active (I do).
- ▶ Accepting risks, independence, courage, resilience, dealing with uncertainty, realising a dream (I want, I can, I dare).

FEATURES

Volman pointed out the main impulses and the pitfalls of the New Learning. Because New Learning was not clearly defined, everyone could present their views. That's one of the reasons why the Entreprenasium schools not only chose a clear pedagogical approach based upon the now internationally accepted competencies, but also to formulate some educational content and organizational characteristics. This way, they provide a proven framework and force schools to transparency and accountability.

In short these features are: pupils determine (within certain conditions) themselves, (a part of) their learning, their teaching and educational purpose. This applies to both the regular program as well as the

entrepreneurial part. This also is shaped by projects (which meet certain criteria) in which the individual learning goals and existing school subjects are integrated within a context of entrepreneurial action. That entrepreneurial action should take place in interaction with the world outside the school.

The curriculum includes the following three core elements of entrepreneurial learning and personal entrepreneurship: orientation towards citizenship and society in work, study and their own ambitions, talents and personal competencies. All activities and learning outcomes are recorded in a portfolio and /or file visible and verifiable related to the acquired skills.

The required time and efforts can be freed up in two ways. Students can choose not to attend regular classes and work on individual assignments during those hours and school can assign less time to the regular program. (Here's an agreement with the so-called 20/80 learning principle. The difference with this principle is that the Entreprenasium concept affects the learning process for all subjects and the entire curriculum).

The Entreprenasium schools had to deal with the classic barriers and problems in relation to classical knowledge paradigm and the traditional examination. Nevertheless, the present approach provides new insights about student learning and results in education that meets the social trends and the aspirations of young people. ■

EC4SLT – Entrepreneurial Competences for School Leader Teams

Update on EC4STL – Entrepreneurial Competences for School Leadership Teams (EC4SLT), is a two year Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership project. The project team, led by the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences at Newcastle University in the UK, includes:

- ▶ the European School Heads Association (ESHA), based in the Netherlands;
- ▶ edEUcation Ltd from the UK;
- ▶ the University of Jyväskylä in Finland;
- ▶ the University of Primorska in Slovenia;
- ▶ the Bucharest University of Economic studies in Romania.

The project is now in its second year and works with schools from both the Primary and Secondary sectors in Finland, Romania, Slovenia and the UK is underway.

BY PAUL HARRISON



WORKSHOPS WITH SCHOOLS

The university partners have conducted workshops for school leadership teams who were invited to engage with the key research question: can the quality and efficiency of school leadership be enhanced through improved creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship? To investigate how entrepreneurial competences from the business world can support their work, school leadership teams are using the methodology of in-school ‘professional enquiry’ and action research. The schools are now working on key issues from their development plans which were identified during the workshops. Their work will support the development of training modules to promote entrepreneurial thinking and abilities for other existing and aspiring school leaders.

Drawing on models from Woods et al., 2007, 2009), Roomi and Harrison (2011) and other recent research, schools are considering wider application of entrepreneurialism than simply to achieve competitive advantage and success.

Bucharest University of Economic Studies carried out workshops with schools 18th – 19th of November 2015 and 4th of December, 2015.

The participating schools from Bucharest, Romania, are:

- ▶ Virgil Madgearu College (www.madgearu.ro)
- ▶ Nicolae Tonitza College (www.liceultonitza.ro)
- ▶ School no. 120 (<http://scoala120.blogspot.ro/>)
- ▶ School no. 190 (<http://scoala190.ro/>)

During the workshops we presented the project characteristics and objectives, the roles of each entity, the particularities of action research and we began working together on specific topics for each school. The development of entrepreneurial competences for school leadership teams is considered by our school partners as very important for building up high quality environment for education and research, both for pupils and teachers. Strengths of this project, emphasized by our school partners, are the opportunity for cooperation between schools and universities, and the international dimension of the project that will foster the international knowledge transfer among the schools involved.

Entrepreneurialism in a school leadership context might also involve:

- ▶ Social entrepreneurialism to reduce disadvantage, deprivation and social exclusion- innovation with a social mission.
- ▶ Public entrepreneurialism focusing on the presence, values and aims of a public ethos, including community welfare, social justice, democratic participation and accountability- innovation with a democratic and community-oriented mission.

- Cultural entrepreneurialism to advance ideas and values that give purpose to individual and social action- innovation with a mission to bring meaning.

(Woods et al (2007, 2009)

The entrepreneurial leadership training modules which are being developed will aim to develop entrepreneurial mind-sets; to enhance Strategic Thinking & Visioning and ability to communicate a shared vision; Team Building, Personnel Management & Development and ability to influence, empower and motivate entrepreneurial teams; Communication & Negotiation Skills both inside and outside their organization; Resources Mobilization & Optimization to enhance and promote effective use of resources, and develop strategies to deal with adversity and disappointment (Roomi and Harrison, 2011: 20-27).

In designing modules the project team are aware that while there are 'similarities in the learning needs for educational leaders across cultures' there are important differences in how these are manifested. (Scott and Webber, 2015, p.126). As a consequence, the entrepreneurial leadership training model that emerges from this project will also consider 'the unique features of each context' (ibid, p.132)

NEXT STEPS

- The Erasmus partners will meet again to plan the next phase of the project in Jyväskylä in January 2016.
- The final team meeting and a dissemination conference will be held in Slovenia on June 13th 2016. ■

Learn more about the EC4SLT project

Visit our website: <http://www.ec4slt.com/index.html>

Sustain and invigorate existing school heads

In ESHA's work programme for 2016 it was agreed that we should establish a working group "to devise realistic proposals to sustain and invigorate existing school heads".

BY GREG DEMPSTER, SCOTLAND, UK

In those few words there is a very significant and challenging task! The purpose of that entry in our work plan is a prompt to encourage us to share information about our respective education systems. Specifically, how they are designed to develop and enhance leadership, not only in the early stages of becoming a Head Teacher but recognising that all school leaders are still learning and need to do so if they are to continue to be motivated in the interests of their pupils, staff and community.

This article sets out a little about what is happening in Scotland on this front. The members of the ESHA General Assembly have been asked to submit information about what is being done on this front in their countries too so hopefully we will be able to offer you a range of insights in future editions of this magazine.



The first thing to say about Scotland is that while it is part of the UK its education system is entirely different to that of the rest of the UK – from curriculum and examinations to pupil intake dates and teacher training. Leadership development and renewal is no different.

New Head Teachers are supported into their new role rather than, as is too often the case at present, being handed the keys to the school and left to get on with it

There have been a series of influential reports about Scottish Education in recent years including an internal review called 'Teaching Scotland's Future' and two OECD reviews – a country review and a review of the implementation of our new curriculum. While all these reports have been positive they have also included a considerable number of recommendations about how to improve our system. Leadership has featured in all of them.

A product of action following the 'Teaching Scotland's Future' report was a new organisation called the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL). It has been tasked with developing leadership at all levels in Scottish Education from new class teachers to experienced school leaders. A big piece of their work is being progressed under the banner of our Framework for Educational Leadership – if you are interested in leadership development it is very much worth a look <http://www.scelframework.com/>

Focussing on School Leadership, SCEL's early actions have been to develop a new qualification that must be achieved before candidates

can apply to be school heads. This is now in operation and SCEL is in the process of designing additional programmes to sit either side of that qualification – one on ‘middle leadership’ which will help people perform at that level as well as to aspire to headship, the other will be an ‘extended induction programme’ which will mean that new Head Teachers are supported into their new role rather than, as is too often the case at present, being handed the keys to the school and left to get on with it. All three of these elements will accrue post-graduate qualification credits with the intention that the completion of all three should lead to a Masters qualification in School Leadership.

A further strand of SCEL activity, specific to the ESHA interest of ‘sustaining and invigorating existing school heads’ is the SCEL Fellowship programme. While the programme will address only small



numbers in this group it offers a unique opportunity to enhance and share the experience of those who have been school leaders for some time. The programme aims give experienced Head Teachers (who are still in post) advanced and stretching development opportunities – including engagement with the latest in educational thinking and a range of key players in our system – to support them in their capacity to contribute to system level leadership. Two groups of participants have completed the programme so far. The intention is that SCEL Fellowship, with time, will serve as a form of recognition at the highest level for leaders in education whose status and expertise is recognised within and beyond the teaching profession. There is an expectation that SCEL Fellows become champions for leadership and the teaching profession.

One Head Teacher from the first group of Fellowship participants commented:

‘The opportunity to engage with experienced colleagues, leading thinkers and researchers has had a massive positive impact on me as a person and as a leader. I have found myself re-stimulated and reinvigorated in my role and I look forward to my continuing engagement with colleagues and the college.’

In addition to the SCEL work on this front we have a recent whole-system change – part a political promise and part another recommendation from Teaching Scotland’s Future – which refocuses attention on the value of career long professional development. All teachers, including school leaders, must be registered with our General Teaching Council (this has been the case for many years) but now they must update that registration every five years to stay on the teaching register. This process is called Professional Update. Part of the process is ensuring that all teachers and school leaders have engaged in appropriate professional development (or Career

Long Professional Learning – CLPL – as it is now known here) and have received proper annual professional review meetings with their line manager. This means that school leaders will now get an annual review (a bit like an appraisal) which will focus on their professional development needs and plan how they might be addressed.

All of these developments are at a relatively early stage of implementation but it would be fair to say that they have, collectively, put leadership development firmly back on the map in Scottish Education and refocussed attention on the need to keep learning and developing no matter what role you play or the level experience you have. We will keep you up to date with developments...

ESHA looks forward to learning more about the systems in place to support professional development for school leaders in our member countries and also looks forward to sharing some of that information with you through these pages. ■

Project IncuVET

VET systems across Europe are very diverse. However, many VET schools have in common that they fail to offer a smooth transition for young people into the world of work. Whereas integration of start-up pre-incubation services feels like second nature to Higher Education Institutions, like-minded initiatives in VET schools are scarce despite the fact that it should make perfect sense, since most have often managed to develop relationships with local employers. This cooperation with local businesses in the shape of apprenticeship schemes and other actions constitute consolidated practices that would help explain the growing popularity of the vocational tracks.

BY IVAN DIEGO AND FRED VERBOON



With a highly relevant curriculum and close connections with the marketplace, VET schools are in an unbeatable position to put forward an ambitious entrepreneurship education agenda. Ad-hoc subjects have been designed and embedded in national VET curricula together with widely adopted mini-company schemes and business ideas contests. Quite interestingly, this already positive picture has been enriched in the last years with the growing concern about the pedagogical aspects of entrepreneurship.

INCUVET

IncuVET is a 2-year project (2014-2016), co-funded under the Erasmus+ program of the European Union and implemented by a transnational Consortium of 8 expert partners from Spain, Belgium, Finland, Estonia and Greece. The overall vision underpinning the

IncuVET project contemplates “an improved understanding and better rounded provision of Entrepreneurial Education and Start-up Support in VET Schools”.

In this line, the IncuVET consortium is set to identify basic elements of an ideal VET school-based entrepreneurial support system, drawing on existing initiatives and best practices among the consortium and beyond, and to provide an information hub to collect material. IncuVET envisages to support and promote an innovative role for VET schools as local/regional hubs for entrepreneurship, beyond the mere provision of start-up advice. VET schools are in a position to stir a multi-stakeholder process where local authorities, employers, start-ups, teachers and students come together to shape the way entrepreneurship education is embedded in the curriculum and learn from each other in a collaborative way, with valuable impact on the schools, the students, the market and the community as a whole. During the project as many good practices as possible VET schools will be described. This is the first article.

BEST PRACTICE 1: INNOOMNIA IN FINLAND

InnoOmnia is an innovation development unit within Omnia, a multisector vocational education provider and regional development centre in Finland. Omnia, with entrepreneurship at its heart, has five campuses in the Espoo and Kirkkonummi regions with over 700 staff and 10.000 students. Omnia has exposed all of its staff to these new pedagogies.

InnoOmnia was established in 2011 and is composed by 200 new/would be entrepreneurs. Furthermore, InnoOmnia have trained over 1.000 teachers and school leaders and hosted more than 3,000 visitors.

It is steering a multi-stakeholder process where academics and

students come together with local authorities, employers, start-ups to shape the way enterprise is embedded in the curriculum and learn from each other addressing challenges that touch upon a variety of aspects related with entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial education.

www.incuvet.eu

Entrepreneurship Education is pretty much a local endeavour in Finland. The main developments at national level in policymaking have paved the way for the integration of entrepreneurship education in the lifelong learning path. The Espoo Local Authority has had an immense influence in crafting a sound vision and implementation of entrepreneurship education. In 2009, the Ministry of Education “Guidelines for Entrepreneurship Education” envisioned a projected state of affairs in 2015 where measures to develop entrepreneurship education would primarily originate in the regional and local levels. The Espoo metropolitan area strategic commitment to become a learning city has somehow proved the ministerial “fortune-tellers” right. In 2009 “Entrepreneurship in VET” report identified prevalent gaps across Europe having to do with limited student participation, ineffective teaching methods, and limited involvement of entrepreneurs. In Finland, local authorities and educational institutions draw up and adopt their own curricula based on the core curriculum.

SOME BASIC IDEAS ABOUT INNOOMNIA

It isn’t easy to come up with a clear definition but let’s start with this one: InnoOmnia is a lifelong learning hub and a meeting point for entrepreneurs, teachers and students.

The reasons for its setup had to do with the increasing rates of youth unemployment in the Espoo area, low rate of entrepreneurs with VET background, the lack of an incubation units serving the needs of VET students in Espoo area and last but not least the need to embed entrepreneurship education in VET courses.



If you're visiting InnoOmnia for the first time, you will suffer the Superman syndrome. Not an incubation unit, not a teacher resource centre, not a career guidance service for students, what on earth is it then?

"InnoOmnia means different things to different people". Students can do their "on-the-job" training in InnoOmnia or cooperate with in-house entrepreneurs in projects. It is also a playground, a living lab for Omnia teachers willing to put to test new pedagogical approaches. Local entrepreneurs can start-up their operations here (more than 200 start-ups were created here in 5 years) but above all, the premises were carefully designed to increase informal collaboration between teachers, students and entrepreneurs and make that "slow magic" happen in the shape of new projects.

InnoOmnia attempts to break down the education silos, increase innovation capacity and entrepreneurship and develop new services for citizens in the Espoo region.

Entrepreneurship education is firmly embedded in the curriculum of VET courses in Omnia. It consists of compulsory (Internal Entrepreneurship) and elective subjects (External Entrepreneurship), complemented by extracurricular learning activities such as a 24-hour Entrepreneurial Adventure Camp and the JA-YE Company Program. During the learning path, students develop a balanced mix of entrepreneurial competences: work life skills and personal management skills. Communication, interaction, personal branding, flexibility and productivity do constitute the foundations of a successful transition into adult life.

HOW TO MOTIVATE AND GRAB STUDENTS' ATTENTION?; TEACH SUCCESS!

At InnoOmnia, teachers tap into their professional experience and bring together different resources and perspectives to answer a big question: How do I teach "Success"? Teachers support their students to set clear professional and personal goals and activate their sense of self-worth. In order to build a sound understanding of the industry, the learning experience of students is enriched by providing access to external inputs, articles, participation in events/fairs and active involvement in project-based learning. In these projects, local companies are the clients and the students work for the company on real life projects.

Another interesting pedagogical model at InnoOmnia is the Team Academy concept from Jyväskylä University. The concept was developed in the '90s as a lecture-free methodology based on the labour cooperative model and principles. Initially conceived for Higher

Education Business/Economics students with certainly impressive results (40% go on to start-up their own companies), the model has gained traction leading some VET schools in Finland to start tinkering with the Team Academy concept. In May 2013, Espoon Kyky Coop was formed in Omnia. It is currently staffed by 60 members, 3rd or 2nd year students, who join on a voluntary basis. In order to become a fully-fledged member of the coop, the membership fee is €20. The cooperative has a fairly small annual turnover of €50,000, mainly derived from a wide range of services provided to actual customers in Espoo area. Espoon Kyky Coop is a great learning environment that provides real on-the-job learning opportunities for students, while they gain subject content knowledge. The cooperative is also used as a place to put to test a series of vocational skills.

BEST PRACTICE 2: TKNIKA IN SPAIN

TKNIKA is the Centre for Innovation in Basque Vocational Training. Through networking and direct involvement with the Basque VET teachers, TKNIKA develops innovative projects in the areas of technology, entrepreneurship, education and management. TKNIKA is a public institution, promoted by the Basque Department of Education, Culture & Language Policy.

TKNIKA is a 100% public institution. Most of staff members are VET teachers. Currently, 36 of them are on a full-time yet temporary contract. Interested teachers apply to join one of the project workgroups. They usually stay at TKNIKA for 2-3 years before heading back to their permanent position at the VET School. With new knowledge and skills, they are ready to lead processes of change once they start teaching again.

TOWARDS A DIFFERENT VET

“Towards a different VET” is the simple yet inspiring strap line of the

recently approved 4th Basque VET Plan. It's definitely a declaration of intent but also the key *raison d'être* for TKNIKA. Since its inception in 2005, TKNIKA has been trailblazing the path to better align VET policy and practice with creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship at its heart.

TKNIKA strategic orientation is informed by the present needs of a wide spectrum of key stakeholders in the VET Ecosystem: schools, teachers, students and employers. All project outputs, the new methods and technologies developed at TKNIKA, are expected to be ready for application at VET Schools and potentially scalable. This brings as a result a generalized "upskilling" process first made visible on teachers and students. But further down the pipeline, this highly-skilled workforce is bringing added value for employers and industry as well.

All in all, TKNIKA is a key driving force in the transformation of the Basque VET system. Its vision and mission are perfectly aligned with the guiding principles contained in the 4th Basque VET Plan. TKNIKA's key strategic areas are:

- ▶ Entrepreneurship & change management
- ▶ Learning methods & processes
- ▶ VET Applied Innovation
- ▶ Internationalisation
- ▶ Continuous improvement

Entrepreneurship is a clear example of the high degree of alignment of TKNIKA its actions with the new VET Education policy framework. To realize it first key strategic area, Entrepreneurship & change management, TKNIKA's have initiated two projects:

- ▶ IKASENPRESA: Mini-company program for VET Students
- ▶ URRATSBAT: Integrated business support in VET Schools.

IKASENPRESA AND URRATSBAT

Ikasempresa and Urratsbat are two interconnected initiatives. The former is largely concerned with the development of skills and attitudes while Urratsbat builds into it encouraging and supporting VET students and alumni to set up their own businesses

IKASENPRESA is a very popular mini-company programme for VET students. In 2014-15 school year, 46 VET schools, 94 teachers and 2200 students took part in it and 325 student minicompanies were set up. They operate throughout the school year. Real products are designed and sold at a regional fair. Best projects are awarded. Categories include best business idea, best market research, best promotion strategy and most socially responsible practice.

Apparently yet another mini-company thing but two aspects need to be highlighted:

- Curriculum embedment
- An active Community of Practice by and for teachers

CURRICULUM EMBEDMENT

All VET courses in Spain include a compulsory module in Entrepreneurship: “Empresa e Iniciativa Emprendedora – EIE” (Enterprise and entrepreneurial initiative). The module falls into the “learning about/learning for entrepreneurship” category which basically means a lot of theory and some virtual business planning. TKNIKA has seized the opportunity to adapt IKASENPRESA contents and methodology to enable the adoption of a more practical approach while meeting the curricular requirements of the module. Teachers are seen as the key factor of the program. Tknika puts at their disposal a wide array of tools, materials and CDP opportunities but the most relevant aspect here is TKNIKA has successfully nurtured and supervised the creation of a strong Community of Practice of Ikasempresa VET-teachers. Its members meet on a regular basis



to discuss and share their teaching materials, methods and videos. TKNIKA coordinates this whole process that taps into teachers expertise and experiences to update and improve the syllabus and the suite of teaching resources, evaluation tools and training opportunities available.

URRATSBAT

URRATSBAT is the next logical step after IKASENPRESA. VET schools involved in Urratsbat project are committed to provide integrated start-up support for VET students and alumni alike. To date, more than 50 VET Schools in the Basque Country do already accommodate business incubation units within their premises. The project has been in operation for over 7 years.

On a typical school, three teachers who are specialized in career planning and entrepreneurship supervise the project. The school has

an incubation center that provides office space for 5 different business projects and experience much higher demand. Start-ups can be in incubation for 2 years. Tenants have access to school workshops, labs and equipment and the teachers/advisors know-how.

While these physical spaces may be the icing on the cake, that's not the whole story. Integrated start-up support in VET Schools entails a well-orchestrated methodology, and envisages a brand new role for teachers directly involved. The teacher become a coach or consultant and help to students to achieve their goals. A typical start-up process is split up into 5 different phases:

- ▶ Awareness
- ▶ Project selection
- ▶ Promoters training
- ▶ Project tutoring
- ▶ Company start-up
- ▶ Business planning
- ▶ Incubation

Ever since 2004, this approach has led to the creation of 532 companies. For a good proxy of the quality and sustainability of the firms created under Urratsbat umbrella you have to look at the impressive 3-year survival rate (71%). TKNKA supports teachers with Specific training on business advice, a strong network (again) and the opportunity to participate in study visits to different European countries. Back at school, Urratsbat teacher coordinators see their number of lessons substantially reduced so that they can devote more time to their business advising role.

ETHAZI: THE END OF (VET) WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

The projects that are described above seem to be driven by a narrow definition of entrepreneurship (focus on business management skills)

and geared towards business start-up. The Ethazi project focuses on systemic innovation.

Employers are increasingly demanding professionals with an expanded skill set. In addition to technical knowledge a range of skills needed in the workplace: teamwork, creativity, adaptation to change, digital skills, communication, personal and social responsibility, etc. TKNIKA has created a new learning model, ETHAZI, that improves the professional competence of VET students by focusing on this new skills set.

ETHAZI stands for ETekin HAndiko ZIkloak (High-performance VET courses). Performance is understood here as maximizing content mastery while developing their professional and soft skills. ETHAZI is a ground-breaking methodological change expected to become a reference model for VET training in Euskadi.

The key element underlying the entire learning model is collaborative challenge based learning: the proposal of a problematic situation and its transformation into a challenge. This is a powerful learning scenario, where the student, on an individual and team basis, takes action and produces a result applying technical and transversal skills.

In all cases, the class splits up into small teams and the problem is exposed. The process must be carefully designed so that the student experiences the situation as a challenge. Its open-ended character grants students the opportunity to identify, learn and apply the knowledge and skills needed to come up with the best solutions. This approach does not fit nicely into the VET School as we know it. In its current format, timetables, evaluations and physical learning environments impose constraints and require re-thinking and consequent redefinition that entails:

Inter-modularity – Silo-based education is no longer an option. Inter disciplinary is a must for the design of challenges that resemble as much as possible real situations students will face in the workplace. Teachers from different departments have to work together and align their goals. How? Keep on reading.

Self-managed teaching teams – Teams consist of 2-3 teachers working together to design a good challenge. This requires the previous selection and graceful combination of a precise set of learning outcomes from different discipline. Teaching teams are disbanded as soon as the challenge is over so that throughout the course each teacher contributes to different teams.

Reorganization of learning spaces and collapsed timetables – The implementation of these new methodologies requires rearranging classrooms, equipment, furniture and specific spaces. The main characteristics of their design are flexible, open, interconnected spaces that favour active collaborative work.

Skills assessment geared to development – Evaluation is a key element and the student is also expected to play an active role in assessment. Self-assessment is coupled with frequent feedback from teachers and peers. I'm sure we've heard it all before, right? Yet we were delighted to hear a specific tool was developed.

The first pilot in 2013-2014 involved 5 VET Schools, 320 students and 90 teachers from different vocational tracks. At present 39 VET Schools (84 groups) are already taking their first steps in implementation. Now, what does it take to make it happen? Sensible policymaking, school management team support (every school involved has to appoint an ETHAZI learning coordinator) and of course, good teacher training. TKNKA offers 3 different ETHAZI courses totaling 90

hours of training. First course is focused on cooperation skills, the second one deals with methodology and didactic skills and the third one touches upon assessment and feedback. And that's precisely the topic of the next section of this article.

SET, SKILLS EVOLUTION TOOL: ASSESSMENT OF TRANSVERSAL SKILLS

SET is a powerful online platform for competence-based assessment. Tools like this do not come out of the blue. SET taps into previous work undertaken and shared by teachers at different schools. The tool enables the assessment of a previously agreed set of skills and attitudes that define the profile of an entrepreneurial professional. It includes a set of rubrics with a pre-defined set of criteria and descriptors for each of the skills. Once you're logged in as a teacher, the tool lets you fully customize different aspects such as adding/deleting classes/students, choosing the skills you'll be assessing and modifying rubric criteria and descriptors according to your own needs.

Assessment is carried out in three iterations. At the end of each term the tool compiles the results of self-evaluation, peer evaluation and teacher evaluation and facilitates the generation of visual graphics and reports. Both students and teachers are expected to support the grades with specific evidence that will be contrasted in short formative feedback sessions with each student. ■

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Lost in transition: VET, apprenticeships and entrepreneurship

“Plain common sense seems to suggest apprenticeships could be used to further advance the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills but regardless of such potential, experts acknowledge most apprenticeship schemes currently in place do not explicitly train entrepreneurship skills.” (OECD, 2010).

BY IVÁN DIEGO, ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION PROJECT
COORDINATOR FOR VALNALON.

The title is an attempt to capture what has been a recurring issue in our ongoing efforts and discussions to pin down the essential defining features of a truly entrepreneurial VET School under the frame of the EU-funded project “VET Schools as Entrepreneurial Hubs”.

Finding common ground for VET apprenticeships and entrepreneurship is not an easy task. On the one hand you have the hyperpragmatics boldly asking: Should apprenticeships deal with the development of entrepreneurship skills at the expense of the mastery of key technical skills? The

overtly laissez-faire optimists come next with a rhetorical question: Isn't it happening anyway from the very first moment an apprentice sets foot in a company? These two questions seem to sum up the views and concerns of a sizeable number of employers in Europe. According to the "Survey on VET-business cooperation on entrepreneurship, skills and apprenticeships (PDF)" (ICF-GHK, 2014) "more than two thirds of the large companies" admit that "the development of entrepreneurial skills has been largely absent from cooperation agreements between employers and VET schools" and, you better take a seat, they "do not find such cooperation immediately relevant". This does not feel like solid ground for further discussion. Yet, the usual messages depicted in the media are tinged with employers regretting the gaps and shortages on a myriad of key skills such as creativity, initiative or communication of the current and future workforce. Two interrelated questions ensue. Do they really mean it or is this just the by-product of social desirability or political correctness? For, nobody in their right wits will dare to refuse embracing the mandate for more creativity/entrepreneurship/innovation.

If we give credit to CEDEFOP claims in the report "Skill shortages and gaps in European Enterprises" (CEDEFOP, 2015) creativity and entrepreneurial capacity are key to greater competitiveness of European firms in a globalized economy and VET policies should be geared towards their development in schools. Although this supports our argument it is fair to point out we might as well discard it as a far-fetched last minute claim. Just consider the only mention to "creativity and entrepreneurial capacity" is found at the very end of the 144-pages document. But, assuming they are so pivotal, I guess VET policies should also be looking at the coordinated development of these capacities in schools and in workplaces alike and the most readily at hand opportunity for this to happen is in the realm of apprenticeships.

LOST IN TRANSITION

Latest depictions of the labor market are not really uplifting. “Complex, fractured and demanding” are recurrent adjectives that best describe the situation according to recruiters (Mann & Huddlestone, 2015). VET graduates find themselves stranded in the frayed ends of a shrinking labor market after a perilous journey. [Akkerman et al \(PDF\)](#) conceptualize apprenticeships as a boundary crossing. This piece of research reports important differences in the epistemic culture (the way knowledge is conceived) and the identity position (or the role assumed by students) in VET Schools and workplaces. Now, future research should clarify if the epistemic culture and identity position is also prone to change if “entrepreneurship/creativity” is placed at the heart of the work placement experience. To put it in a different way, are they easily subsumed into the transversal “hoopla” about employability and its fuzzy definition or is it just an altogether different boundary that we are attempting to cross here when it comes to school to work transitions?

The answer to this question may substantially alter the way apprenticeships are designed and planned at present. Potential courses of action may entail modeling apprenticeships after initiatives such as [“Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs”](#) or, in the case of larger companies, just following the trailblazing efforts of BMW to put in place a scheme of apprentice-run companies within the company (ICF-GHK 2014, p. 26). But an obvious while truly revolutionary shift in the discussion has to give the floor to students, teachers and workplace supervisors. In this sense, participatory approaches such as the [Change Laboratory](#) (Morselli, 2014) may help in redesigning apprenticeships from a research-informed perspective.

As I hate ending on a high note, let me sober our expectations quoting a politically-loaded statement: “Between a half and two thirds of

EU firms with difficulties finding skilled workers face the problem for reasons other than lack of skills: unattractive job offers (unwillingness or inability to offer a competitive market wage; bad job quality; precarious contracts); and lack of employer commitment to talent management.” If you think this is a speech heard at an anti-Davos demonstration, you clearly underestimate my sources. Again, this is a snippet of text snatched from the report **“Skill shortages and gaps in European Enterprises”**(CEDEFOP, 2015). Ergo while the dyad “apprenticeships and entrepreneurship” is a bush that surely needs beating, it seems to be playing second fiddle to what really matters to fix this mess. Now, I beg your pardon but I need to keep relentlessly treading the mill of my lifelong search for employability in this certainly shrinking labor market. Although “Shrinking” is a word apparently banned from the Holy Playbook of Employability. My apologies in advance. ■

FURTHER READING

Akkerman, S. F., & Bakker, A. (2012). ‘Crossing boundaries between school and work during apprenticeships’. *Vocations and Learning*, 5(2), 153-173.

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European School
Heads Association