

## **Developments in EU / UK Entrepreneurship / Enterprise Education Policy - Current Debate and Implications**

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This paper builds upon the findings and policy recommendations of our previous three papers (Mukhtar and Redman 2000, 2001, and 2002) that examined the gap in UK SME training between training providers and receivers. We raised the issue of the “Small Business Ethos” in relation to learning and training – the distinguishing culture of the entrepreneur and the role of entrepreneurship in establishing a business. We now highlight current policy thinking to form the foundation of this culture at an early stage - the introduction of enterprise (or entrepreneurship) education.

Our previous papers are based on the often much ignored SME owner/managers perspective. This paper, the first from a policy makers’ perspective, reviews the thrust of current macro policies being drafted in the European Commission to close the learning and training gap between policy makers and SMEs.

We focus in particular on the ‘Lisbon Strategy’ - the declaration of the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000 that the European Union must become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth. The Lisbon Council defined entrepreneurship as one of the ‘new basic skills’ for the knowledge-based economy. It is policies related to the latter that are discussed, as well as their relevance to the UK SME sector and innovative ability, if any, to introduce effective ‘positive’ change to the SME ‘image’. The paper concludes with the policy framework needed for implementing entrepreneurship education at a national level.

**Keywords:** Enterprise / Education / Policy / EU / UK

## **1. The Lisbon Strategy: Background**

If the European Union is to 'become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world' more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, then to achieve this ambitious goal, Heads of States and Government must implement 'not only a radical transformation of the European economy, but also a challenging programme for the modernisation of social welfare and education systems'.

To ensure the implementation of the so called, 'Lisbon Strategy', Ministers of Education adopted in 2001 a Report on the 'Concrete Future Objectives of Education and Training Systems' agreeing for the first time on shared objectives to be achieved by 2010. A year later, the Education Council and the Commission endorsed a 10-year work programme to be implemented through the 'open method of coordination' stating that by 2010, Europe should be the world leader in terms of the quality of its education and training systems. Approved by the European Council, Ministers of education agreed on three major goals to be achieved by 2010 which constitute the new and coherent Community strategic framework of co-operation in the fields of education and training with a view to making a reality of lifelong learning:

1. To improve the quality and effectiveness of EU education and training systems;
2. To ensure that they are accessible to all;
3. To open up education and training to the wider world.

To achieve these goals, the Directorate General Education and Culture (DG ED) of the European Commission has established 8 Working Groups of officials from the Ministries of Education in the member states (including the Accession Countries), together with representatives of stakeholder organisations – for example, the EU Social Partner organisations, in order to facilitate the implementation of the Lisbon Agreement in EU member states. These Working Groups are to provide policy recommendation to DG Education and advise the Commission on guidance to the Council of Ministers for suggested national policy. They have been working over the course of the last two years on one or more objectives of the work programme. In addition, with experts from 31 European countries, their role is to support the implementation of the objectives for education and training systems at national level through exchanges of 'good practices', study visits, peer reviews, etc. With the support of the Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks set up by the Commission in 2002, indicators and benchmarks are being developed to monitor progress.

‘Education and Training 2010’, therefore, integrates all actions in the fields of education and training at European level, including vocational education and training (the ‘Copenhagen Process’). In addition, the ‘Bologna Process’, initiated in 1999 is crucial in the development of the European Higher Education Area. Both contribute actively to the achievement of the Lisbon objectives and are closely linked to the ‘Education and Training 2010’ work programme. This paper considers the current discussions taking place in Working Group B (Basic Skills, Language Learning and Entrepreneurship) and focuses specifically on the work of the Subgroup on ‘Entrepreneurship’<sup>1</sup>. In addition, a review of relevant UK initiatives is presented including a UK ‘good practice’ example that could serve as a case study for others to follow.

## **2. Entrepreneurship Education and Training: The EU National Perspective**

Conceptual work was undertaken by Working Group B (WGB) to follow up the Concrete Future Objectives and a detailed discussion paper was submitted. This section focuses on the discussion of the subgroup on ‘Entrepreneurship’ with a view to distilling the key policy initiatives under consideration and to be validated by WGB.

### **2.1. Redefining Entrepreneurship as a Key Competence**

Eight domains of key competences with the corresponding knowledge, skills and attitudes, including those supporting the development of education for entrepreneurship, have been defined by WGB. In summary these are grouped under the following headings:

1. Communication in the mother tongue
2. Communication in foreign languages
3. Mathematical literacy (including Science and Technology )
4. ICT
5. Learning to learn
6. Interpersonal, intercultural, social competences (including civic competencies)
7. Entrepreneurship
8. Cultural awareness

However, before education needs and related policy measures could be identified, the concept of ‘entrepreneurship’ itself needs to be defined as there is often confusion as to what is meant by the

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<sup>1</sup> Subgroup on ‘Entrepreneurship’ part of the Working Group B (Basic Skills, Language Learning and Entrepreneurship) comprises members representing the Zentrum für Schulentwicklung (Austria), UNICE/UEAPME (EU), Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft (Germany), Institute for Pedagogical Research (Czech Republic), Ministry of Economic Affairs The Netherlands, University of Piraeus (Greece), and the Ministry of Education of Belgium (Flanders).

term. For example, in the educational field, entrepreneurship is often taken in the narrow meaning of the term and it suffers from a certain *image problem* in falsely equating 'entrepreneurship' to 'running a business, being an employer or self-employed person'.

It is worth noting that the WGB Discussion Paper indicates variations in the interpretation of "entrepreneur" and "enterprise". In the UK, for example, in the framework of "Entrepreneurship education", the terms "Enterprise learning" or "Enterprise education", broadly embrace the full range of contexts, not just business, and are more likely to receive a positive response from the UK teaching profession.

Entrepreneurship as a '*general competence*' is therefore defined as having:

A passive and an active component with the propensity to induce changes oneself, but also the ability to welcome and support innovation brought about by external factors by welcoming change, taking responsibility for one's actions, positive or negative, to finish what we start, to know where we are going, to set objectives and meet them, and have the motivation to succeed.

While '*key competences for entrepreneurship*' are defined as requiring:

*A transferable, multifunctional package of knowledge, skills and attitudes that all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, inclusion and employment. These should have been developed by the end of compulsory school or training, and should act as a foundation for further learning as part of Lifelong Learning.*

It is worth noting that this definition comprises two major criteria:

- Competences that can be labelled 'key' are *transferable* and *multifunctional* in a variety of situations and contexts.
- Key competences are necessary for each individual to be successful in life. Individuals lacking key competences are likely not to reach personal fulfilment, not to get a good job and not become an active member of society.

Transferability and multi-functionality refer not only to employability, but to aspects running horizontally and vertically through lifetime that can be roughly structured into three areas essential for modern society:

- Leading a private life that promotes personal fulfilment including family, friends, leisure activities, etc.

- Professional life that primarily secures income but also acts as a source for personal fulfilment and contributes to quality of life.
- Participating in society and contributing to its further development by being an active citizen on different levels, engaging in NGOs, etc.

Entrepreneurship, if only understood as the abilities and skills applicable for running an enterprise, could not be included into a set of key competences. WGB and experts of DG Enterprise (DG ENT) adopted a definition of entrepreneurship that goes beyond a narrow perspective. Entrepreneurship includes planning, organising, analysing, communicating, doing, de-briefing, evaluating and recording progress in learning. ‘Management competences’ are relevant in private life for managing one’s household etc. as well as for business and also for participation in society. Other important aspects of entrepreneurship relevant in all three areas of life include identifying one’s personal strengths and weaknesses, displaying proactive behaviour, being curious and creative, understanding risk, responding positively to changes and the disposition to show initiative.

## **2.2 Policy measures needed for implementing entrepreneurship education**

WGB definition for ‘*education and training for entrepreneurship*’, therefore, includes two components:

- A *broader* concept of education for entrepreneurial attitudes and skills, which involves developing certain personal qualities and is not directly focused on the creation of new businesses; and
- A more *specific* concept of training on how to create a business.

Given that the underlying premise of these policy measures is to promote entrepreneurship at the grass root level, the Council and Commission Joint Interim Report on the Education and Training 2010 process reiterates the need for promoting entrepreneurship as one of the key competences in schools. Against this background, a number of specific recommendations are made for defining policies for effective entrepreneurship education and supporting schools in teaching entrepreneurial competence. The five recommendations are outlined below.

### **Recommendation 1:**

As promoting entrepreneurship education is a horizontal issue, policies concerning education and training, enterprises and employment should work together coherently in order to create a comprehensive approach to address the various aspects that are related to meeting the objective

of 'increasing the spirit of enterprise' as stated in the detailed work programme of WGB, and suggests that:

- Inter-Directorate cooperation is crucial (for example, the way the Subgroup works with DG ED and DG ENT);
- European level indicators would be useful in making policies more coherent at the national level;
- Organising conference(s) of national Ministries of Industry and Education and all relevant stakeholders (social partners, etc.), would present examples of projects and strategies implemented and evaluated;
- Existing examples in Europe should be presented and publicised to provide good ideas. A portal in the internet accessible to policy makers and practitioners should be established to disseminate good practice examples;
- Progress in Member States in implementing entrepreneurship education should be monitored in the framework of the Lisbon objectives.

### **Recommendation 2:**

In order to create coherent and comprehensive policy at national level to support entrepreneurship education, it is crucial to establish permanent and sustained inter-service coordination involving all departments and actors concerned, as:

- It is vital that permanent structures, such as steering groups bringing together different Ministries, are in place. Ensuring a well structured dialogue and partnership (including social partners representing all levels of employers and employees, NGOs, etc.) would facilitate common efforts in the area. Links to relevant policies (such as Responsible Entrepreneurship and Consumer Protection) should be included;
- National education and systems, including curricula and the implicit assumptions regarding different traditional paths of education and training, should be analysed;
- Quantitative and qualitative benchmarks or targets should be set up at a national level, to facilitate the achievement of measurable goals.

### **Recommendation 3:**

All national curricula should include explicit objectives for entrepreneurship education, accompanied by appropriate guidelines and support mechanisms that facilitate its local implementation, by:

- Having entrepreneurship explicitly included in the national framework curriculum to provide the incentive for better cooperation. National policies should make it clear that cross-

curricular objectives such as entrepreneurship have a status as high as the more 'measurable' subjects. The promotion of coherent lifelong learning policies in general gives a proper framework in developing entrepreneurship as one of the key competences;

- Enhancing the role of entrepreneurship in the initial and continuing training of teachers, heads of schools and other staff, especially because it supports other learning objectives such as management of one's own learning. Supporting activities leading to better entrepreneurial competences of pupils, may contribute to the overall motivation and well-being of pupils at school;
- Encouraging education in general to understand risk taking and initiative taking and dealing with failures constructively.

#### **Recommendation 4:**

It is necessary to emphasise the wider competences related to entrepreneurship education in order to raise the profile of its image and vital contribution to society, so that:

- Policies and practices ensure that entrepreneurship is understood in its broader meaning; as a competence linked to learning to learn, social and civic competence to avoid the common misunderstanding that it is only about establishing a business. Moreover, curriculum development should make it clear how the existing elements in the curricula are linked to entrepreneurship competence (initiative-taking, managing one's learning etc) to promote understanding of the broad definition of entrepreneurship competence;
- The importance of defining the different target groups is understood (such as heads of schools, administrators, teachers, parents, school boards) to provide information that focuses on its broad benefits accordingly. All new proposals for the target groups concerning entrepreneurship education must be adequately explained and publicised, particularly to parents, in order to ensure their support;
- Entrepreneurship education objectives are transformed into concrete and achievable 'products' such as mini-companies run by pupils, or modularising objectives into concrete programmes and courses to enable schools to implement the objectives.

#### **Recommendation 5:**

Since entrepreneurship education is a cross-curricular objective, schools should be provided with a coherent support mechanism that facilitates the practical implementation of relevant activities, and:

- Schools should be empowered to create a learning environment that supports the acquisition of cross curricular competences such as entrepreneurship. They should have the appropriate

resources in terms of time, financial resources and flexibility to coordinate activities aimed at developing pupils' competencies. They should be encouraged to organise courses outside the formal educational offer, to improve their capacity for taking new initiatives. Promoting self-assessment of schools, with the focus on cross-curricular objectives such as entrepreneurship competence, will encourage them to take up innovative approaches and programmes. Accompanying formal pupil assessment with supplementary means such as portfolios would not only motivate students to participate in different activities, but make the competences of pupils more largely visible;

- Access to entrepreneurship education material and examples of good practice should be organised to enable teachers and students to find ideas that suit their needs, supported by positive exchange visits to assist in the development of these ideas;
- Companies could be given appropriate and proportionate incentives (tax and others) to welcome students and contribute to their training. Responsibilities of teachers, schools, enterprises in relation to security should be clarified at all levels when students visit or train in companies to learn about enterprise. Regulations should be clear enough not to hinder schools;
- National competitions that highlight the most innovative programmes and practices would provide a stimulus for improving practices with regard to entrepreneurship education;
- Appropriate career advice, guidance and counselling should be ensured for all schools and pupils. At the moment, most of this advice is provided by large organisations. The role of local businesses in this respect should be increased to provide better understanding of careers in SMEs and their role in the local economy.

### **2.3. Policy Success Indicators**

The discussion in the Subgroup acknowledged the difficulties in creating *quantitative indicators* on entrepreneurship education, in particular with regard to the broad conception of entrepreneurship as a life skill. It was considered that *qualitative indicators* could be more helpful in this context. It was suggested that:

- The Commission should involve institutions in the various countries to develop the collection of information on entrepreneurship education and ways to assess progress in participating countries;
- As it is not possible at the moment to have comprehensive quantitative data on entrepreneurship education (i.e. about all existing programmes and activities), indicators targeting some specific and well-known programmes can help in creating a first basis for monitoring progress. The new Commission's project on 'Mini-Companies' can greatly

contribute, as that data on the most important programmes using the methodology of mini-companies and virtual firms will be collected in all countries and at European level;

- Qualitative indicator 1 of the Expert Group coordinated by DG ENT that requires: ‘By ... (YEAR) a high level *coordination group* for entrepreneurship education will be in place, including representatives from different Ministries (Economy or Industry, Education, etc.) and agencies’, should become a benchmark by setting a target as to when these groups should be in place.

The Commission intends to continue the cooperation between Directorate-Generals for Education and Entrepreneurship. A Commission Communication on entrepreneurship education will be prepared, and in 2005 a conference on entrepreneurship education is planned. The Standing Group on indicators and benchmarks will examine the proposals on entrepreneurship education indicators.

### **3. Entrepreneurship Education and Training: The UK perspective**

#### **3.1. Policy Background**

Overall, the UK policy rests with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), while the development and integration is the responsibility of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) within the remit of the National Guidance Framework. The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) provides policy advice and disseminates good practice on enterprise learning in schools.

However, ‘entrepreneurship (enterprise) education’ remains very limited in education in the UK compared to the USA and other European countries. There is still antipathy towards ‘business’ ethics and values being inculcated into education, as highlighted by the Howard Davies Review (2002) and by the QCA in discussion on education for adult life.

Although it is clear that the DfES is actively funding the development of ‘enterprise education’, however as noted by WGB, enterprise education is sometimes incorrectly regarded as being synonymous with developing entrepreneurial skills. Whilst very few pupils will become entrepreneurs, in the strict sense of the term, all will need enterprise skills in adult life. In this regard, the DfES has sought to clarify the concept as a matter of policy and states that enterprise education has three main strands:

1. Enterprise capability: the capability to handle uncertainty and respond positively to change, to create and implement new ideas and new ways of doing things, to make reasonable risk /

reward assessments and act upon them in personal and working life. This will depend on the development of:

- Knowledge and understanding of concepts – organisation, innovation, risk change;
  - Skills – decision making (particularly under conditions of uncertainty), personal and social, leadership, risk, management, presentational;
  - Attitudes – self-reliance, open mindedness, respect for evidence, pragmatism, commitment to making a difference, assertiveness, competitiveness, independence.
2. **Financial capability:** the degree to which young people are equipped with understanding of financial capability necessary to become a questioning and informed consumer of financial services and the ability to manage finances effectively.
  3. **Economic and business understanding:** focusing on the context of business, central to which is the idea that resources are scarce so that choices have to be made between alternative uses.

It is argued that the second and third of these strands need to be successfully taught if the first is to succeed. The development of enterprise capability has a necessary relationship to business and economic understanding and financial literacy, while being a distinct outcome in its own right. Enterprise capability can be developed by young people taking up opportunities provided for them in the school curriculum. It can take the form of discrete activities, such as enterprise days or mini-enterprises or social enterprises, referred to as enterprise activities. Both of these formats are termed enterprise education.

### **3.2. Overview of UK Curriculum**

Two major reviews of the UK curriculum have been undertaken: the Howard Davies Review and the Tomlinson Review.

The Davies Review of Enterprise and the Economy in Education (2002) reported that effort to build a deeper and wider entrepreneurial culture must begin in schools. The review identified ways to strengthen the links between the education system and business, as an important step in building a more enterprising society across the country. The review found that schools already play a part in developing a more positive view towards careers in business amongst young people, though many lack the skills and confidence to turn positive attitudes into action during their future careers. Evidence presented by case studies in the Review indicate that enterprise activities in schools can provide an awareness of the opportunities available to them in business, and develop skills and confidence that can help them to start up in business. Enterprise activities also strengthen the relevance and understanding of pupils' mainstream work in school.

The Interim Report of the Working group on (age) 14–19 curriculum reform (Tomlinson Review, 2004) suggests it will contribute to curriculum development to provide pupils with ‘a range of common knowledge, skills and attributes, such as self-awareness, self-management, interpersonal skills and international awareness, (that) should be integrated into delivery of the programme as a whole. All learners should participate in some wider activities based on personal interests, contribution to the community and experience of employment to foster their personal development. All young people should have access to personal planning, review and guidance to underpin their programmes, consolidate their learning and inform their choices.’ (Interim Report of the Working Group, February 2004, page 18)

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### **3.3. Policy Initiatives**

There are now new opportunities to develop work-related and enterprise learning within schools:

- First, there is increased curriculum flexibility given to schools to develop vocational learning in the 14–19 curriculum (enhanced by recommendations by the Tomlinson Review);
- Second, the statutory requirement to provide Work-Related Learning (WRL), defined as about, through and for work, for all pupils at Key Stage 4<sup>2</sup>. This will include enterprise activities, a Statutory requirement for Work-Related Learning that implements an entitlement to five days of enterprise education for all pupils aged 15 in secondary schools by September 2005, and follows the recommendations to develop, through enterprise, the skills and confidence that young people need, ensuring that they are appropriately and well prepared for work, enterprise and employability; and
- Third, the development of new vocational qualifications that make it possible for all pupils to choose from a range of pathways, not only ‘traditional’ pathways, but also vocational pathways, or a mixture of both.

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Against this background, the UK government has now introduced a number of initiatives to support enterprise (entrepreneurship) education that includes:

#### **3.3.1 Enterprise Education Pathfinders**

The Enterprise Education Pathfinders project in the UK, promotes cooperation between schools and local companies especially in disadvantaged areas by giving opportunities for young people

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<sup>2</sup> The National Curriculum is organised on the basis of five key stages, one applies to children aged 3-5, two are applicable to primary schools and two to secondary schools. Key stage 4 applies to age 14 – 16 and requires qualification to higher level / NVQ Level 4.

to experience and understand enterprise, business and the economy and financial literacy, thus motivating them and helping them to optimise the benefits of schooling. The Government now provides for secondary schools wishing to become “Enterprise Education Pathfinders” to develop enterprise education, and in particular if the schools:

- Are in deprived areas with under-developed links with local businesses;
  - Want to develop links with Black and minority ethnic enterprises;
  - Propose to involve Enterprise Advisers in innovative ways to support their enterprise projects;
  - Want to experiment with e-mentoring by business people as part of their enterprise project;
  - Wish to develop progression in pupils’ enterprise education from key stage 3 to key stage 4;
  - Seek to teach enterprise with social or co-operative enterprises;
  - Seek to focus on the financial capability of aspects of enterprise.
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### **3.3.2. Enterprise Insight**

Not surprisingly, the WGB has highlighted the importance of raising the profile of entrepreneurship (enterprise). In the UK, ‘Enterprise Insight’ is responsible nationally for ‘marketing’ and promoting enterprise education through organising an Enterprise Week, creating networks of young people, facilitating enterprise activities within the community with the objective of creating a culture of enterprise in the UK. Its membership includes a range of stakeholders, including the DfES. The campaign aims to be the driving force for a culture of enterprise in the UK:

- To inspire and mobilise young people to be enterprising;
  - To promote the different range of support available to those young people who have ideas and want to make them happen;
  - To be a catalyst to challenge those who influence young people, the media and policy makers to recognise the significance of enterprise and to raise their game.
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### **3.3.3. The Enterprise Education Adviser service**

Introduced by Ofsted as part of the reform of the 14-19 curriculum from September 2004. Enterprise Advisers (EntAs) have experience of businesses to provide expert advice and support to head teachers and teaching staff in secondary schools with a view to developing the enterprise curriculum and activities. They are an additional specialist resource to enhance existing Education Business Link organisation work with schools, rather than ‘more of the same.’

Specifically, EntAs will deliver the following according to the requirements of individual schools' action plan:

- Guidance and support in devising suitable enterprise elements for key stage 4 pupils. Facilitate and broker links with local business, in particular small businesses, and the development / use of appropriate local networks (including existing networks) to improve both the quantity and quality of such links;
- Advice and guidance for head teachers in developing an enterprise capability;
- Facilitation and support for schools to offer the full range of vocational and work related learning experiences;
- Advice and help in the use of enterprise techniques in school management and in the professional development of teaching staff;
- Complementing the potentially wide range of other enterprise initiatives / activities in their area, such as Enterprise Pathfinder pilots or Local Education Authority led initiatives, and disseminating emerging good practice to their identified schools.

### **3.4. Case Study: (St Cuthbert's Catholic Community High School, St Helens)**

This secondary school is located in the centre of an area of socio-economic disadvantage. Principal traditional employment in the area was coal mining and heavy engineering, as well as glass manufacture. Both mining and engineering operation has virtually disappeared and glass processing has been significantly reduced in terms of employment. The Headteacher, Mr Rod Irving, comments:

'We firmly believe that structured dialogue between schools and employers and the consequent establishment of a strong 'business ethos and spirit' in schools is the best way to engage young people from difficult areas with high unemployment in a more relevant and properly contextualised curriculum. We run three 'on Campus' businesses at our school. We have an Hotel, which in addition to creating jobs for local people in an area of high unemployment, will soon provide work experience on all levels for our students and those from other schools. We run our own highly successful Commercial Gym which is heavily supported and appreciated by our local community at a quarter of the price demanded by similar quality establishments in the business world. We run our own Catering Company, which feeds 400 pupils a day, the residents in the hotel, of which there are now many, does outside catering, provides meals and buffets for people using our conferencing facilities and does a 'meals on wheels' service for local people.

The involvement of our students, under the guidance of an externally funded Business Manager, has had a huge effect on the attitude to work of our student population in Key Stage 4. The motivational / aspirational element of business is considerable. When our current Year 11 came into our school five years ago, we were obtaining approximately 30% at 5A+ to C. Their achievement this year will be in the region of 60% and a lot of that can rightly be attributed to a different curricular and extra curricular content, involvement with the world of business as well as a more vocationally orientated choice.

Traditional attitudes have got to change and make way for the new era of pragmatism and consultation between the politicians, the employers and the educationalists. Only then will we be able to maximise the potential of our young people in the more needy areas of the country and provide a trained work force to further develop the prosperity of our local communities.'

#### **4. Conclusions and the Way Forward**

It is clear that in view of the definitions and criteria set by WGB, schools would necessarily need to deal with entrepreneurship at all stages, beginning with the more general skills and competences at primary school level and later adding more specific concepts of training on how to create a business especially at upper secondary level. However, as opposed to the teaching of traditional subjects like maths or physics, where schools generally have a monopoly, there is a strong influence on developing entrepreneurship from the perspective of non-formal and informal education.

Entrepreneurship education should therefore be expressed in framework curricula as a 'cross-curricular objective'. The Davies Review in the UK revealed that less than 30% of young people gain 'enterprise' experience at any point in their school career. Moreover, few gain the necessary awareness of finance and economic issues, vital skills for any would be entrepreneurs. However there are exceptions as is the case with the St Cuthbert's Catholic Community High School noted above.

In comparison, in the EU there are a number of very successful national initiatives already in place in line with WGB recommendations which could be used as guidelines for policy development in the UK. These include the following examples:

- In Austria due to a strong apprenticeship system, those in vocational training are more likely to establish small enterprises after having completed training. Entrepreneurship education is

part of the curricula of middle and higher vocational training schools, for example in the form of students running a training (fictitious) firm;

- In Belgium (Fl) the Department of Educational Development has worked together with organisations from economic field to formulate cross-curricular objectives for entrepreneurship for primary and secondary education;
- The Czech curriculum reform has used the framework of 8 key competences as a starting point and defined objectives and implementation guidelines for entrepreneurship education;
- The Student Company Programme promoted across Europe by Junior Achievement-Young Enterprise students create and run mini-companies during one school year. These are real enterprises operating in a protected environment, producing and selling real products or services. In Norway, public funding to Young Enterprise Norway is granted by three different Ministries. In Ireland, a number of state programmes use the methodology of mini-companies (examples are the Transition Year Programme and the LCA);
- In Iceland there is great emphasis on innovation through the ‘Young Inventors Competition’, which is embedded the national curriculum with about a third of all primary schools participating;
- In the Netherlands, the Entrepreneurial City is a project based on creating ‘learning landscapes’. Children are trying to accomplish a certain goal, e.g. setting up their own power station at school or starting their own third world shop;
- The Driving Licence for Entrepreneurs in Austria has 4 modules. The first module follows the broad conception on entrepreneurship and can be chosen in lower-secondary. The following modules in upper-secondary education lead to a certificate that is acknowledged by employers.

Coherent policies are needed in order to support cooperation between different sectors involved at all levels of decision making and administration to ensure successful implementation of Entrepreneurship education at school level.

As an indication of the competences seen as essential to ‘entrepreneurship’ the Council for Excellence in Leadership and Management (CEML) have suggested that whilst ‘there is a plethora of schemes available, many publicly funded, the majority offering formal learning opportunities’, many entrepreneurs were confused by the array of opportunities, and found the approach bureaucratic and often irrelevant to their needs. This suggests that if attitudes are formed in the early stages of education, then to improve management and leadership abilities in entrepreneurs, it is vital to provide relevant guidance within the curriculum.

As CEML notes: 'The real challenge is to join entrepreneurs in their world'. In support of this concept eight key areas are suggested that entrepreneurs say are important to success:

1. Decisions, strategies and setting goals;
2. Creating personal drive;
3. Communicating with others;
4. Motivating others;
5. Delegating to others;
6. Winning business;
7. Keeping control of quality and administration;
8. Dealing with money.

Reinforcing the view of the personal qualities required to develop 'enterprise' thinking, the Small Businesses Enterprise Development Initiative (SFEDI) notes in the Small Businesses Skills Assessment 2004 that running a small business means being able to handle a wide range of jobs. Small business owners and managers themselves describe a diverse range of skills they needed, including:

- Business strategy and analytical thinking, to include vision, strategic and analytical thinking, managing change, decision making, problem solving, setting goals and business planning and spotting and seizing opportunities;
- People abilities, that include communication, motivation, emotional intelligence, team working, building confidence, giving social and emotional support and the ability to listen and engage;
- Functional or task-based abilities involving financial awareness, marketing, delegating, organisational skills, technical skills, and multi-tasking.

It is interesting to note the correlation between the 'required' skills listed by CEML and SFEDI and those set out as 'key' skills by Working Group B.

As the Headteacher of St. Cuthbert's commented: 'attitudes have got to change', and taking the examples we have given above and the recommendations from the range of discussions we have outlined, it is clear that building any policy framework must include the following elements:

- Effective inter-departmental co-ordination, following the principle of 'joined-up Government';

- Active encouragement to raise the public perception of vocational qualification in line with that of academic achievement;
- Encouragement to raise the social status of entrepreneurship by appreciation of their economic contribution to society;
- Practical support to develop enterprise activities in local secondary schools, particularly in their competitive contribution to the local market place;
- Careers advice that must include consideration of opportunities in local SMEs, and an understanding of the needs of those businesses in relation to the qualities required in their employees;
- Recognition and validation of acquired competences, especially those gained in the workplace;
- Positive support for SMEs in developing their links with local educational institutions that do not jeopardise their resources or profitability;
- Guidance to teachers on the attributes of the 'small business ethos' in comparison to that understood in large organisation employment;
- Recognition and positive consideration of the small business sector as an effective and vital social partner at both national and regional level;
- Involvement of SMEs and their intermediary organisations in local economic policy planning and delivery, and
- Consideration of 'good practice' examples throughout the EU to facilitate assessment and improvement of UK initiatives.

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