



SME Policy Index

The Mediterranean Middle East and North Africa 2017

Implementation of the Small Business Act for Europe

An interim assessment

Indicators and guidelines for the human capital dimensions

March 2017



1. Context

Through its European Neighbourhood Policy,¹ the EU and its partner countries in the Southern Neighbourhood have signed up to working together to achieve the closest possible political association and the greatest possible degree of economic integration. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) make up the larger part of each economy and are the mainstay of economic growth and employment. The Small Business Act for Europe (SBA)² is the primary reference mechanism for the European Union and the countries, working in partnership, to track progress in building a more effective operating environment for SMEs. It includes provisions to promote human capital. In particular: to promote a) a more entrepreneurial culture through education, b) women's entrepreneurship which plays a critical factor in the wider growth and jobs agenda, and c) SME skills. Progress is monitored by the Working Party on Euro-Mediterranean Industrial Cooperation.³ The Working Group is backed up by meetings of ministers (EU and Southern Neighbourhood) responsible for economy and industry who take stock of progress and decide on future priorities⁴, and who adopt a multi-annual work programme.

On 8th March 2017, the Working Party on Euro-Mediterranean Industrial Cooperation agreed a) to review SBA progress by all countries since the last assessment in 2013, b) to help shape a next work programme (2018-2021) and c) to share the outcomes and recommendations at an upcoming inter-ministerial meeting provisionally scheduled for 29 November 2017 (date to be confirmed). The European Training Foundation (ETF) assists the Working Party on Euro-Mediterranean Industrial Cooperation in monitoring the human capital dimensions. Other SBA dimensions are supported by the European Commission, OECD and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

This note provides an overview of the assessment process whose outcomes will provide inputs to the November 2017 inter-ministerial meeting. It comprises three indicators and guidelines to support the Southern Neighbourhood countries in determining progress in the SBA human capital dimensions.

2. Scope

The 2017 SBA assessment will be "lighter" than previous assessments focusing only on key elements per SBA dimension and progress since 2013. Three indicators feature in the human capital assessment: a) a more entrepreneurial culture through education, b) women's entrepreneurship which plays a critical factor in the wider growth and jobs agenda, and c) SME skills to access international markets.

All three indicators build on the previous assessment tools used in the 2012 assessment. Taken together the three indicators will capture key developments in each of the three areas, identify challenges and provide pointers as to next phase developments:

- **Entrepreneurial learning:**⁵ this indicator focuses on entrepreneurship in upper secondary education (both general and vocational). It addresses both policy and practice. Particular attention is given to entrepreneurship as a key competence as well as entrepreneurship skills. Upper secondary education plays a critical role in promoting the employability of young people

¹ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/330/european-neighbourhood-policy-enp_en

² https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/small-business-act_en (Translation in French should have appropriate footnote)

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/DocsRoom/documents/4447/attachments/1/translations>

⁴ See conclusions of the last meeting of Ministers of Union for the Mediterranean ministerial meeting on Euro-Mediterranean Industrial Cooperation of 19 February 2014.

⁵ For ease of reference, in this indicator entrepreneurial learning refers to all forms of education and training, both formal and non-formal, including work-based learning that contribute to entrepreneurial spirit and activity, business creation and development.

be it as future employees, self-employed or entrepreneurs. To note, unlike entrepreneurship business skills (sales, marketing, financing management), entrepreneurship as a key competence promotes an entrepreneurial spirit and mind-set (includes phenomena like creativity, opportunity identification, risk-taking) that employers increasingly seek in fast-changing economies.

- *Women's entrepreneurship*: women's entrepreneurship has significant potential in the wider drive for sustainable growth and employment. In the South Neighbourhood women's entrepreneurship is very underdeveloped. This indicator focuses on how policies and training support for women's entrepreneurship are addressed.
- *SME skills*: skills play an important part in an SME's innovation and competitiveness, its growth potential and its ability to trade in international markets. SMEs working in international markets generate more income for the national exchequer and create more high-quality employment. This third indicator specifically focuses on training to help SMEs internationalise.

3. Purpose and objective

The purpose of the SBA indicators and guidelines is to support countries participating in the SBA assessment to identify progress, challenges and opportunities for skills' development.

The objective of the SBA assessment is to support the Southern Mediterranean countries in three areas:

- *Young people*: to develop entrepreneurship potential of upper secondary education pupils as a factor for improved employability, economic competitiveness and workforce development;
- *Women*: to improve policy frameworks and training for women's entrepreneurship;
- *SMEs*: to boost SME innovation, competitiveness and international trading potential including with the EU Single Market, and beyond.

4. Methodology and approach

4.1 Indicators, scoring and guidelines

The assessment comprises three indicators proposed on 9 March 2017 to the Working Party on Euro-Mediterranean Industrial Cooperation.

Each indicator comprises five **levels**, each increasingly more complex and working towards a system-solution for skills improvement in the three areas. These levels make up the assessment's **scoring framework**. Given the system-driven objective of the indicators, a satisfactory scoring on a given level requires that lower levels of the indicator are also satisfied i.e. a Level 5 score requires that all criteria in Levels 1-4 are additionally satisfied (see below).

Each level of an indicator includes a number of statements or **criteria**. The assessment requires evidence to satisfy these criteria. This document includes guidelines for each indicator to support the assessment with examples of evidence that could be drawn upon to support the criteria.

The assessment is **time-bound** to determine progress since the last SBA assessment. Therefore, each criterion will be assessed against developments in the period 2013-2017. Evidence (e.g. national legislation) which pre-dates this period and which still applies is also taken into consideration.

4.2 Focus Groups and the self-assessment

Self-assessment: each country will undertake a **self-assessment** of each indicator to determine evidence available to meet the demands of each level of the indicator. This self-assessment should involve all key stakeholders working as a **focus group** to maximise the value of intelligence available to meet the

demands of the indicators. The multi-stakeholder focus groups also ensure a participative and inclusive approach to policy review.

For this assessment, it is recommended to establish two focus groups:

- Focus Group on Entrepreneurial Learning Promotion in Upper Secondary Education; and
- Focus Group on SME Internationalisation skills and Women's Entrepreneurship

A leader for each focus group should be appointed to act as liaison point for group members, as well as for the SBA coordinator and ETF (see below).

Focus group meeting with ETF: the outcomes of the self-assessment of each focus group will be brought to a workshop involving focus group members to be facilitated by ETF. The objective of each workshop is to assess the viability of evidence for all criteria within each level of the indicator and to determine what additional evidence could be sought to improve the scoring on the indicator. Given the range of stakeholders involved in each focus group, the self-assessment and meetings of the focus groups, including the workshop facilitated by ETF aim to maximise the potential of available evidence to support the overall assessment.

The results of each focus group will be a) set of evidence to support the indicator(s), b) a first draft scoring and c) agreement on additional evidence (action points) to be sought to complete the assessment.

The results of each focus group, including workshop follow-up actions points agreed between ETF and the group, will be shared with the National SBA Coordinator in each country (see Annex 1). The SBA Coordinator will review the materials before dispatch to ETF.

4.3 External Assessment

In a final step in the assessment, ETF will review all materials submitted by the SBA coordinator and may contact the focus group leader for clarifications, before arriving a scoring on each indicator and recommendations for next step developments. This phase is the external assessment and is complimentary to both the self-assessment and focus groups.

4.4 Role of the SBA Coordinators

The role of the SBA coordinators is key to the implementation and success of the assessment exercise. Suggested actions to be undertaken by SBA coordinators include:

- identify all key stakeholders and establish the two focus groups;
- appoint leader for each focus group to liaise with all stakeholders and to encourage fullest contribution to the assessment;
- with the two focus group reference points, organize the focus groups. ETF will participate at one of the meetings of each focus group (see above) that will last half a day and preferably take place in the morning. The SBA coordination office will provide logistical support (meeting rooms, coffee/water and interpretation (if necessary)).
- Liaise with ETF before and after the focus meetings where ETF is present on SBA intelligence, scoring and draft reports.

4.5 ETF support

ETF will provide support to each country. The ETF team comprises a Country Desk Officer and member of ETF's entrepreneurship team (see details below). Each team will:

- based on its networks, support the SBA Coordinator in the identification of the participants in the Focus Groups;

- participate in one meeting of each Focus Group and facilitate discussion on its respective indicator(s), suggesting evidence and options to maximise the eventual scoring;
- review the country self-assessment;
- consider additional evidence submitted by the SBA Coordinator to finalise scoring;
- draft a text on the country's SBA performance on the three indicators and consult with the SBA coordinator on the draft;
- provide drafts to the European Commission and OECD as inputs into the wider SBA publication;
- liaise with the EU Delegation in the country and share the assessment's results with the European Commission, as inputs their programming and evaluation exercises.

5. Calendar

The following table outlines the calendar related to the assessment of the SBA human capital indicators.

Table 1.
Schedule for SBA assessment activities

Activity	Date
Dispatch by email of indicators and guidelines to SBA Coordinators	29 March
Formation of focus groups and appointment of the reference points	By mid April
Focus group meetings in-country including one meeting with ETF team to conclude with follow-up action points for additional evidence	Mid-April till end of June
Country self-assessment	By end of June
ETF assessment and scoring, consultation with SBA coordinator and validation of scoring	By mid of July
ETF write-up and endorsement by the country	By end of August
Presentation of the findings and scores at the regional SBA coordinators' meeting	September
Submission of the assessment to European Commission and OECD for publication	October
Presentation of the key findings at the inter-ministerial meeting	November

5. ETF coordination and support

5.1 Country teams

Country teams have been mobilised to support each country with the SBA assessment. Each team comprises the Country Desk Officer and a member of the ETF entrepreneurship team.

Table 2.
ETF SBA assessment country teams

Country	ETF team	
	Country Desk Officer	Enterprise Expert
Algeria	Ms Sabina Nari <i>sna@etf.europa.eu</i>	Ms Kristien Van den Eynde <i>kvd@etf.europa.eu</i>
Egypt	Mr Filippo Del Ninno <i>fdn@etf.europa.eu</i>	Mr Anthony Gribben <i>aag@etf.europa.eu</i>
Israel	Ms Lida Kita <i>lki@etf.europa.eu</i>	Ms Olena Bekh <i>obe@etf.europa.eu</i>
Jordan	Mr Mounir Baati <i>mba@etf.europa.eu</i>	Ms Olena Bekh <i>obe@etf.europa.eu</i>
Lebanon	Ms Simona Rinaldi <i>sri@etf.europa.eu</i>	Ms Kristien Van den Eynde <i>kvd@etf.europa.eu</i>
Morocco	Ms Sabina Nari <i>sna@etf.europa.eu</i>	Ms Mariavittoria Garlappi <i>mvg@etf.europa.eu</i>
Palestine	Mr Filippo Del Ninno <i>fdn@etf.europa.eu</i>	Mr Anthony Gribben <i>aag@etf.europa.eu</i>
Tunisia	Ms Mariavittoria Garlappi <i>mvg@etf.europa.eu</i>	Ms Mariavittoria Garlappi <i>mvg@etf.europa.eu</i>

5.2. Coordination and contact

Overall coordination of the assessment and back-up is assured by Ms Mariavittoria Garlappi who is the ETF SBA assessment leader. Any queries should be addressed to Mariavittoria on email: mvg@etf.europa.eu or by telephone +39 011 630 2243.

Indicator 1	Entrepreneurial Learning promotion in upper Secondary Education (general and vocational)
Rationale	<i>Upper secondary education plays a critical role in promoting the employability of young people both as an employee, self-employment or as a future entrepreneur.</i>
Objective	<i>Upper secondary education promotes entrepreneurship as a key competence and entrepreneurship skills of young people</i>
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Entrepreneurial learning is promoted at upper secondary education through ad-hoc initiatives.
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National policy dialogue for developing entrepreneurial learning in upper secondary education is ongoing. ▪ There are initiatives of school-enterprise cooperation dedicated to entrepreneurial learning.
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Entrepreneurial learning is part of national policy and includes school-enterprise cooperation. ▪ There are examples where entrepreneurship as a key competence is applied at school level and which are known to the education authorities.
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A dedicated action plan for entrepreneurial learning exists, with monitoring and evaluation arrangements and financial support. ▪ At least 10 % of all upper secondary schools have established structured partnerships with enterprises dedicated to entrepreneurial learning. ▪ Upper secondary school teachers have access to in-service teacher training for entrepreneurship as a key competence.
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Entrepreneurship as a key competence is included in the national curriculum. ▪ All upper secondary schools provide data on range of entrepreneurial learning activities for the purpose of monitoring, evaluation and further policy development at national level.
Justification	
Key sources	
Next steps	

Guidelines for Indicator 1

Entrepreneurial learning promotion in upper secondary education (general and vocational)

Rationale

Upper secondary education plays a critical role in promoting the employability of young people both as an employee, self-employment or as a future entrepreneur.

Objective

Upper secondary education promotes entrepreneurship as a key competence and entrepreneurship skills of young people.

Level of education

This indicator addresses upper secondary education that comprises general education and vocational education and training (VET).

Note, schools and VET providers are those accredited by the national authorities. These can be both public and private training providers.

What does entrepreneurial learning mean?

ETF defines entrepreneurial learning as: *“all forms of education and training (formal, informal and non-formal) which contribute to an entrepreneurial spirit and behaviour with or without a commercial objective”*.⁶

Formal education and training refers to the teaching and learning processes in school and which are subject to formal assessment. Non-formal refers to learning that is not subject to formal assessment (e.g. extra-curricula activities). Informal learning refers to learning acquired incidentally e.g. through social media.

A considerable amount of entrepreneurial learning happens outside the formal education. This non-formal entrepreneurial learning is often supported by private and non-governmental organisations (INJAZ, GIZ, Mercy Corps, etc). Examples of non-formal entrepreneurial learning projects include after-school entrepreneurial clubs, creation of virtual companies, mini-companies at school.

Entrepreneurial learning within the formal education is often still dealt with as a separate subject, for example: “basics of entrepreneurship”. Pupils learn, for example, how to write a business plan, how to manage a budget, how to design creative and innovative products, how to better understand the needs of the customer, etc.

⁶ ETF INFORM, Issue 16, June 2013, Entrepreneurial learning: keystone to an entrepreneurial culture

What does entrepreneurship as a key competence mean?

Entrepreneurship as a key competence goes further than the development entrepreneurship skills. It addresses the psychological and behavioural traits associated with more entrepreneurial people, such as creative thinking, problem solving, identifying opportunities and risk management.

In 2006, the European Union agreed on a set of key competences for lifelong learning that includes the entrepreneurship competence.⁷ This is complimented by European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (EntreComp) which provides a set of learning outcomes at three different levels of education: basic, intermediate and advanced.⁸

What is a learning outcome?

Learning outcomes are statements of what a pupil should know, understand or be able to do after completion of secondary education. This indicator encourages the development of entrepreneurship key competence learning outcomes for upper secondary education (as part of a wider package of entrepreneurship key competence learning outcomes for all levels of education).

At upper secondary education level, learning outcomes for entrepreneurship skills (e.g. elaboration of a business plan, undertaking a market research for a product developed at the school) could also apply, particularly but not exclusively, for upper secondary vocational education.

Entrepreneurship skills vs entrepreneurship key competence

Note that while promotion of entrepreneurship skills can be a feature of upper secondary vocational education (e.g. finance, marketing, taxation, business administration), this indicator gives particular attention to entrepreneurship as a key competence (see below) in upper secondary schools – general and vocational.

Level 1

Entrepreneurial learning is promoted at upper secondary education through ad-hoc initiatives.

A level 1 scoring characterises where entrepreneurial learning is delivered on a project basis at selected schools. At this level, entrepreneurial learning is not an established part of the school curriculum.

Examples of entrepreneurial learning activities at this level are

- Teacher or school-driven activities,
- Projects supported by local interest groups in the school vicinity (e.g. a local enterprise),
- Initiatives with the financial and expertise inputs from international donors.

⁷ Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning, OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, p. 10. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2006.394.01.0010.01.ENG&toc=OJ:L:2006:394:TOC

⁸ Bacigalupo, M., Kampylis, P., Punie, Y., Van den Brande, G. (2016). EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework. Luxembourg: Publication Office of the European Union; EUR 27939 EN; doi:10.2791/593884 <http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC101581/lfn27939enn.pdf>

The key point is that activities at this level are undertaken in the absence of any policy or systemic building approaches to entrepreneurial learning.

Level 2

Bullet one

National policy dialogue for developing entrepreneurial learning in upper secondary education is ongoing.

A level 2, reflects the case where entrepreneurial learning is still not an established part of the national curriculum but policy discussions are ongoing. It requires evidence that key stakeholders from ministries (e.g. education and training, industry or economy ministries), national agencies (e.g. SME agency or qualifications agency), employers' organizations, trade unions, NGOs are in discussion with a view to a more strategic development of entrepreneurial learning in secondary education.

An example of policy dialogue would be where a working group is set up to discuss how to improve entrepreneurial learning for the country. The working group includes representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Economy and the Chamber of Commerce. These discussions may not exclusively be addressed at secondary education but could be part of discussion on entrepreneurship across the entire education system. Examples of evidence to support this bullet could be:

- Minutes of cross-stakeholder meetings on entrepreneurial learning that includes upper secondary education;
- A discussion paper on entrepreneurship promotion in upper secondary education;
- A focus group is tasked with providing inputs to a national economic reform programme and in a submission to the Prime Minister's office recommends that priority be given to entrepreneurship promotion in secondary, post-secondary and higher education.

Bullet two

There are initiatives of school-enterprise cooperation dedicated to entrepreneurial learning.

This bullet requires evidence of at least two examples of school-enterprise cooperation in upper secondary schools.

Examples of school-enterprise cooperation could include:

- Work placements (internships) for pupils which include opportunities for pupils to learn the administration of a business;
- Representatives from local businesses that come to the school and who provide pupils with an insight to the how a business works;
- Local businesses that are involved in school-based projects on entrepreneurial learning where children learn from the entrepreneur;
- Pupils' visits to local enterprises focus on aspects of the business which ensure young people understand how the business is administered or managed or some aspect of the its work, particular (e.g. marketing, sales);
- A young entrepreneur telling his/her story of what it means to be an entrepreneur (opportunities, challenges, contrasts with employee status);
- A women entrepreneur sharing her experience in a girls' school, acting as a role model.

Note that for vocational education and training, the school-enterprise initiatives should not only be dedicated to the occupational curriculum but include aspects of entrepreneurial learning. For example, the pupil doing an internship in a restaurant should dedicate some time to learn about the administrative issues (e.g. budget, taxation, health and safety of staff).

Level 3

Bullet one

Entrepreneurial learning is part of national policy and includes school-enterprise cooperation.

Evidence to support this bullet must include at least one policy document where entrepreneurial learning for upper secondary education is addressed. This bullet does not necessarily require a separate entrepreneurial learning strategy.

Examples of policy documents that could include entrepreneurial learning are.

- general education reform strategy,
- national employment strategy
- national entrepreneurship strategy
- national development plan
- industrial strategy
- SME strategy

Two issues to note:

- At this level, the policy document need not necessarily address entrepreneurship as a key competence;
- It is important that the national document clearly underlines school-enterprise cooperation for entrepreneurial learning developments.

Bullet two

There are examples where entrepreneurship as a key competence is applied at school level and which are known to the education authorities.

To satisfy this bullet, there must be at least two concrete examples available for the assessment where entrepreneurial learning is recognised as a key competence at school level. Examples of evidence are:

- Copy of the school curricula or lesson plan that includes entrepreneurship competence learning outcomes;
- A mathematics curriculum allows for the costing of a product developed through an art & crafts class;
- Technology curriculum includes a project for pupils to elaborate a proposals for recycling of food waste from school kitchens for submission to national school competition organised jointly by the education and agriculture ministries;
- A description of the project where entrepreneurship competence learning outcomes feature in an extra-curricular activity (e.g. a pupil's entrepreneurial response to closure of a local hospital).

Examples of evidence that would not satisfy this bullet are

- A school mission statement (this would not provide examples of key competence development);

- A report on entrepreneurship in teacher training (while teachers may have followed training the report would not provide examples of key competence promotion, unless otherwise stated);
- A letter from a head teacher indicating that entrepreneurship key competence is a priority for the school (an expression of priority does not provide details on how the key competence is promoted).

To fulfil this bullet, there must also be evidence that the education and training authorities are familiar with projects or initiatives supporting entrepreneurship key competence at upper secondary level. This is an important first step for eventual scaling-up of good practice. Examples of evidence could be:

- A representative from the Ministry of Education is invited to a conference where awards are given to the school(s) promoting entrepreneurship as a key competence;
- A national qualifications authority is directly involved in piloting entrepreneurship key competence outcomes in a number of schools.

Level 4

Bullet 1

A dedicated action plan for entrepreneurial learning exists, with monitoring and evaluation arrangements and financial support.

To satisfy this bullet, a government action plan is necessary to promote entrepreneurial learning at upper secondary education level. This may be a separate document or be included within a strategic document. An action plan involves a) activities to be implemented over a given period of time, b) monitoring and evaluation arrangements and c) a dedicated budget for the activities. Note that all 3 of these components must be met to satisfy this bullet.

Examples:

- An annex to a national lifelong learning strategy is dedicated to entrepreneurial learning in lower and upper secondary education and particularly to a piloting of entrepreneurship as a key competence. The piloting has a 3 year time frame and is addressed to a number of schools in different regions of the country. Quarterly reporting to a project implementation office features in the plan. An interim evaluation is scheduled half-way through the piloting with a final evaluation foreseen within 6 months of completion of the pilot.
- A donor-funded, regional development strategy addresses all five regions in a country and includes support for upper secondary schools, including vocational schools. An action plan for the strategy includes support to develop entrepreneurial learning, and includes teacher training. The action plan foresees support initially for 3 schools per region which are monitored by the national school inspectorate which sits on the Advisory Board of the regional development strategy. A second support line will follow in a second phase to an additional 10 schools per region, following a successful evaluation of phase one.
- A multi-country project supported by EU funds promotes the concept of the entrepreneurial school. Education authorities from countries participating in the multi-country project have agreed to share experience from their schools. All participating schools are required to provide quarterly updates on their activities on a dedicated on-line platform. A peer review mechanism is in place where schools evaluate fellow-participating schools' activities. Intelligence and recommendations from the peer reviews are shared across all the network of participating schools.

Bullet 2

At least 10 % of all upper secondary schools have established structured partnerships dedicated to entrepreneurial learning with enterprises.

Intelligence to support this bullet would be tracked by an education ministry and where school-enterprise cooperation would feature in the annual school report submitted to the education ministry. To meet the quantitative demands of the bullet, intelligence would draw on school-enterprise cooperation coverage within annual school reports covering the 2 academic years prior to the SBA assessment.

Examples of evidence to satisfy this bullet could be an official note from the education ministry specifically for the purposes of the SBA assessment in a country with 130 upper secondary schools would demonstrate at least 13 upper secondary schools (10%). have structured partnerships with businesses.

Bullet 3

Upper secondary school teachers have access to in-service teacher training for entrepreneurship as a key competence.

This bullet requires evidence that training is available for upper secondary teachers specifically addressing entrepreneurship key competence. The bullet does not specify numbers of teachers or categories (general secondary or vocational) but training must be targeted at teachers already in service as opposed to trainee teachers.

Evidence to satisfy this bullet could include:

- On-line training for teachers on entrepreneurial learning that includes entrepreneurship as a key competence;
- Workshops to support teachers in upper secondary vocational schools on interfacing entrepreneurship key competence and entrepreneurship skills;
- An introductory course for teachers in lower and upper secondary education on the European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework.

Level 5

Bullet 1

Entrepreneurship as a key competence is included in the national curriculum.

A level 5 scoring will require evidence that the national curriculum framework (in this case for upper secondary education) includes entrepreneurship as a key competence. Ideally, the entrepreneurship key competence should cover all levels of formal education but for this bullet, the assessment specifically focuses on key competence in the national curriculum for upper secondary school education.

The European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework or 'EntreComp' (a copy accompanies this document) provides examples of learning outcomes for the entrepreneurship key competence for all levels of education and training. These can support education authorities in any country in defining their learning outcomes for entrepreneurship key competence.

Bullet 2

All upper secondary schools provide data on range of entrepreneurial learning promotion activities for national monitoring, evaluation and further policy development purposes.

This bullet represents excellence in terms of a system-wide approach to entrepreneurial learning for upper secondary education. It builds on Bullet 2 of Level 4. However, at Level 5 the assessment seeks evidence that all upper secondary schools are included in a system-wide monitoring drive. All annual school reports from upper secondary schools should cover entrepreneurial learning activities, including entrepreneurship key competence promotion (Bullet 4), for this bullet to be satisfied. The bullet also requires a) evidence of evaluation and how b) monitoring and/or evaluation have been used for policy improvement purposes.

Data involves statistics and other intelligence e.g. good practice case studies, teacher training manuals on entrepreneurship competence, pupil entrepreneurship key competence self-assessment tools.

Examples of evidence for this bullet:

Monitoring:

- A letter from the education authorities declaring all schools report on school-enterprise cooperation that includes entrepreneurial learning;
- Numbers of teachers trained on entrepreneurship key competence;
- Progress reports by schools on the school-business cooperation activities.

Evaluation:

- A report covering the evaluation of school-enterprise cooperation (that include upper secondary education) and which includes how schools and businesses cooperate to improve entrepreneurial learning. This could be a stand-alone evaluation of school-enterprise cooperation or part of a wider review of how the wider education system cooperates with business;
- An evaluation report on school enterprise clubs supported by a donor and how these addressed entrepreneurship as a key competence.

Policy implications of monitoring and evaluation:

- Minutes from an annual meeting of the head teachers association include a proposal to the education ministry to establish a national award the entrepreneurial school;
- Minutes of a meeting of the Economic and Social Council include a review of national case studies on entrepreneurship key competence promotion and summarise discussions on the appropriateness and value of the education system adopting/adapting the recommendations of the European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework.

Good Practice

A good practice is attached at Annex 2 demonstrating some of the features of this indicator: entrepreneurship key competence, school-business cooperation as well as impact of the good practice on wider curriculum developments.

Indicator 2	Women's Entrepreneurship Training
Rationale	<i>Women's entrepreneurship plays a critical role in a nation's wider effort to promote economic growth and employment.</i>
Objective	<i>Training for women's entrepreneurship is supported by mutually-reinforcing policies and implementation measures.</i>
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Women's entrepreneurship training is subject to <i>ad hoc</i> interventions.
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A policy dialogue on women's entrepreneurship is on-going in the country. ▪ There are examples of training specifically targeting women entrepreneurs and available in both rural and urban areas.
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A policy document for women's entrepreneurship training has been adopted by the Government. ▪ At least one analytical study, with a dedicated chapter on training for women entrepreneurs, has been published.
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An action plan for women's entrepreneurship training that includes data build-up, with monitoring and evaluation arrangements, is under implementation. ▪ Training for women entrepreneurs is part of a national institutional framework for SME support.
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of women's entrepreneurship training policy is independently evaluated. ▪ Data on women's entrepreneurship training is updated on annual basis and available on-line.
Justification	
Key sources	
Next steps	

Guidelines for Indicator 2

Women's Entrepreneurship Training

Rationale

Women's entrepreneurship plays a critical role in a nation's wider effort to promote economic growth and employment.⁹

Objective

Women's entrepreneurship training is supported by mutually reinforcing policies and implementation measures.

What does "woman entrepreneur" mean?

The term "woman entrepreneur" refers to women involved in entrepreneurial activities – owners or co-owners of existing micro-, small or medium-sized enterprises, including formally self-employed women who own and run (or play executive functions in) their enterprises.

What does "women's enterprise" mean?

The term "women's enterprise" refers to an enterprise where women are majority shareholders and are in charge of the management of an enterprise.

What does "training" refer to?

For the purposes of this assessment training is used in a broad sense and includes traditional forms of classroom training, peer learning, mentoring, coaching and on-line learning. While training is often not dedicated solely to women, for this indicator, there needs to be explicit evidence that access of women to the training is encouraged and customised, if necessary. For example, training offer underlining access for women could include a statement on training available, 'Women are strongly encouraged to join this training', or similar. Secondly, training may be dedicated specifically to women entrepreneurs or potential women entrepreneurs across a range of areas: start-up, early-phase, growth and internationalisation.

Note

- SME training is often combined with advisory and other services e.g. access to finance, incubator services. This indicator recognises training that may feature within a wider service/support package. However, evidence of training offer should clearly feature in the materials to meet the demands of the indicator.
- Networking is not recognised as training unless it has a specific learning outcome(s).

⁹ Training and Support for Women's Entrepreneurship: ETF Working paper, 2014.
http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/Women_entrepreneurship

Level 1

Women's entrepreneurship support is subject to ad hoc interventions.

At this level, evidence of individual (ad hoc) entrepreneurship training for women is available.

Training may be delivered within a wider support programme or as stand-alone initiatives but without a policy context.

Level 2

Bullet 1

A policy dialogue on women's entrepreneurship is on-going in the country.

Different policy areas play a role in women's entrepreneurship (e.g. education, employment, economy, finance/taxation, social/childcare). Consequently, women's entrepreneurship requires a comprehensive set of national policies and support services (e.g. training, access to finance, networks, access to good practice).

To satisfy this bullet, the assessment should demonstrate that discussions are taking place between key stakeholders on women's entrepreneurship. The stakeholders can include different ministries (employment, economy, education), private sector and civic interest groups. Details of who the partners are should be provided.

Evidence for this bullet could include:

- minutes of a working group on national competitiveness includes a section on women's businesses where stakeholders engaged in dialogue are registered;
- a discussion paper for a national conference on SME development with dedicated item in the conference agenda on women's start-ups. A list of participants will demonstrate key actors involved in the discussions;
- on-line consultation by a Parliamentary Committee targets business and civic society on options for improving women's employment, including women's entrepreneurship.

Bullet 2

There are examples of training specifically targeting women entrepreneurs in both rural and urban areas.

To satisfy the requirements of this bullet, evidence needs to be provided on the existence of publicly or privately-financed training for women entrepreneurs or potential women entrepreneurs. The bullet also requires at least two examples of training a) one from a rural area and b) one from an urban area.

Examples of evidence:

- Publication of training courses in newspapers, websites;
- Booklets of training programmes (objectives, training contents, learning outcomes etc.) available on SME agency website;
- Reports on training provision by intermediary organisations e.g. employment services, chambers of commerce.

Level 3

Bullet 1

A policy document for women's entrepreneurship training has been adopted by the Government.

A “policy document” is understood here in its broadest sense. Examples include a strategy paper, a government concept document, a government programme, a decree, an official memorandum. Given that women's entrepreneurship can be a factor in many policies (e.g. economic, employment, finance, gender, education and training), ideally, linkages to these policies should be included in the policy document.

Examples of evidence:

- A self-standing, official document, approved by the government and dedicated to women's entrepreneurship training or women's entrepreneurship development with a dedicated section on training;
- A government document of a more general scope (e.g. national economic plan, employment strategy, equal opportunities legislation, SME strategy) that clearly defines women entrepreneurship as a country priority and which highlights the importance of training for women's entrepreneurship.

Bullet 2

At least one analytical study, with a dedicated chapter on training for women entrepreneurs, has been published.

This bullet requires availability of one of the following:

- An analytical report on women's entrepreneurship promotion with a section/chapter focusing on training, preferably with recommendations for improvement;
- A broader analytical report (e.g. SME, entrepreneurship, economic development, gender equity) that contains a dedicated section on women's entrepreneurship with recommendations for improving training for women's entrepreneurship.

Examples of evidence for this bullet

- An annual progress report for a national economic reform programme includes a chapter on women's entrepreneurship with recommendations for mentoring services for high-potential women's businesses;
- A Government report on 'Women in Society' includes a specific section on women's entrepreneurship and makes proposals for improving women's entrepreneurship training and access to finance in rural areas.

Example of evidence that would not be sufficient for this bullet

- The annual report of the Economic and Social Council includes recommendations for universities and technical colleges a) to upgrade STEM education for women, b) to improve across-campus entrepreneurship promotion, c) to improve access by women to post-secondary and tertiary education. None of the three recommendations individually, or taken as a group, specifically address training for women's entrepreneurship as defined in Bullet 2.

Level 4

Bullet 1

An action plan for women's entrepreneurship training that includes data build-up, with monitoring and evaluation arrangements, is under implementation.

Examples of evidence include:

- An annex to an SME strategy includes specific actions and budget allocation for women's entrepreneurship over a three-year period. This includes immediate financial commitments in the first year to train 300 women-owned start-ups and mentoring for 50 high-tech women-owned businesses. The action plan includes a Monitoring and Evaluation Committee which is tasked with reporting annually on progress to the SME Agency on all aspects of the SME strategy. The women's entrepreneurship annex includes mid-term and end-of-programme evaluations for submission to the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee.
- A donor-supported programme for improving women's economic empowerment, endorsed by the national employment agency, includes a set of actions to promote training of unemployed women. A number of specific actions focus on developing women's micro-enterprises including training and a grant scheme. A total of 300 women to benefit from the programme is the target agreed between the programme management unit (PMU) and the employment agency. The PMU provides quarterly reports to the employment agency highlighting progress and constraints to the programme. A mid-term evaluation is scheduled 10 months into the programme. An end-of-programme evaluation, to be undertaken within 6 months of completion of the programme, is included in the action plan. An option for ad-hoc evaluations to address specific concerns in the programme, should they arise, is also included in the action programme. A dedicated budget line in the programme covers all evaluations.

Important conditions of acceptance of the evidence:

- The action plan must include training for women entrepreneurs or potential entrepreneurs.
- Action plan must contain clear monitoring and evaluation arrangements (performance indicators, base line, and instruments, etc.).
- Action plan must contain provisions to improve data on women's entrepreneurship training to support monitoring and evaluation.

Bullet 2

Training for women entrepreneurs is part of a national institutional framework for SME support.

An institutional framework comprises institutions, resources, and a regulatory basis for continuous support of women's entrepreneurship training according to the government priorities.

Evidence to support this bullet may be of two types:

- Training specifically designed for women entrepreneurs or potential women entrepreneurs is set against a policy context with governmental institutional and financial support;
- Women's entrepreneurship training could be part of general SME training offer. However, in the latter case it should be proven that specific needs of women entrepreneurs have been analysed and the training offer responds to these needs.

To note, ad hoc training programmes that represent a one-time offer would not be accepted as evidence (Level 1).

Level 5

Bullet 1

Implementation of women's entrepreneurship training policy is independently evaluated.

To satisfy this bullet, at least one independent evaluation on the implementation of government policies to support women's entrepreneurship training is required. The evaluation of training could feature within a wider evaluation of support services to women's entrepreneurship.

Note that only evaluation reports published in the period since the last SBA evaluation will be feasible.

The evaluation should be independent of government, provide recommendations for improvements of policies and their implementation.

Bullet 2

Data on women's entrepreneurship training is updated on annual basis and available on -line.

Data on women's entrepreneurship training is critical for evidence-based policy developments.

National authorities should collect data on women's entrepreneurship. Typical data on training women entrepreneurs includes, numbers of women following training, type of training followed, access by different groups of women entrepreneurs, numbers of women following start-up training, mentoring for growing women's businesses, training for high-potential women entrepreneurs, training for women entrepreneurs to access international markets.

Data sources may vary according to different stakeholders. But a comprehensive dataset, updated annually and available on-line, to allow for policy-making, policy improvement purposes will be sought in the assessment.

Important factors for the assessment are as follows:

- Data on women's entrepreneurship must be disaggregated from wider dataset covering men and women to allow for a policy considerations specifically for women;
- Data for women's entrepreneurship training should be updated at least once a year and be available on-line for access by training community, range of policy interest groups and civic society.

Good Practice

A good practice is attached at Annex 3 demonstrating some of the key features of this indicator, in particular how the monitoring and evaluation of the training practice has impacted on policy developments.

Indicator 3	Training for internationalisation of SMEs
Rationale	<i>Supporting SMEs in accessing international markets improves competitiveness and employment.</i>
Objective	<i>Improved training provision for SMEs trading, or with potential to trade, internationally based on enhanced knowledge of international standards and markets</i>
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ad hoc training services related to some aspects of SME internationalisation are available.
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy dialogue on-going on development of training for SME internationalisation. ▪ Information on training programmes and providers for SME internationalisation is publicly available.
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training on SME internalisation is an integral part of national policy. ▪ Training is available for SME internationalisation in at least 2 key economic sectors. * ▪ Public funding available for training for SME internationalisation.
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training for SME internationalisation is available on-line for SMEs operating in at least two key economic sectors. * ▪ Up to 20% of SMEs working in at least two key economic sectors have participated in training on SME internationalisation since the last SBA assessment.
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At least 30% of SMEs working in the key economic sectors have participated in training for SME internationalisation since the last SBA assessment. ▪ Half of the above sample have extended their activities to international markets. ▪ Recommendations from an evaluation of training for SME internationalisation have been followed up.
Justification	
Key sources	
Next steps	

* Key economic sectors could be identifiable within, for example, a government strategy for trade, economic development programme, national development strategy.

Guidelines for Indicator 3

Training for internationalisation of SMEs

Rationale

SMEs working in international markets are more innovative, more competitive and generate more employment.¹⁰ Businesses from European Union's Southern Neighbourhood stand to gain through greater internationalisation which in turn brings value and prosperity to home nations. Further, European neighbourhood policy, which applies to all countries undertaking this SBA assessment, provides for more gradual integration of each country with the EU internal market. Training has an important role to play in supporting the SMEs to access European and wider markets. While SME internationalisation may include areas such as foreign direct investment, importing and technical cooperation, for the purposes of this indicator, internationalisation refers to SMEs capacity to export.

Objective

The objective of this indicator is to boost SMEs export potential through enhanced knowledge and skills.

Note

- Training should be considered in its widest sense and may include coaching, mentoring, self-learning. The defining factor is that the activity must have a specific learning outcome(s).
- For the purposes of this indicator trade missions, international trade fairs or advice & consultancy services do not satisfy the training requirements of the indicator unless they have a specific and clearly articulated learning outcome. Also networking as an activity is not recognised as training unless it has a specific learning outcome(s).

Level 1

Ad hoc training services related to some aspects of SME internationalisation are available.

At this level there are examples of training programmes to support SME internationalization but without a clear policy context. These could include regulatory training for specific sectors (e.g. agri-food) trading with the EU or more generic training (e.g. applied language training for new markets i.e. how to negotiate a deal and finalise a commercial contract with Chinese customers). Trade fairs are not training events but are information and networking events and would therefore not be sufficient evidence for the indicator unless the trade fair is part of a wider learning programme. See example from Enterprise Lithuania (Annex 4) which was an ETF good practice in 2015.

¹⁰ European Commission (2010). Internationalisation of European SMEs. Final Report.

Level 2

Bullet 1

Policy dialogue on-going on development of training for SME internationalisation.

This bullet requires evidence that training to support SME internationalisation has already engaged policy interest. While it does not require a specific policy position (required at Level 3), it does demand that discussions on policy options are at least being considered between at least two stakeholder organisations. Examples to satisfy this bullet are:

- As part of a bilateral support programme, the SME agency has invited sector representations from the economy into a series of round tables focusing on issues and options for SMEs to gain access to international markets. Training is one of the issues addressed in the round tables;
- Ministry of Trade and the Chambers of Commerce have launched a business survey to determine training needs of SMEs who would like to access international markets. The outcomes of the survey will be shared at a private sector development meeting later;
- As part of an EU cooperation strategy, the economy ministry is undertaking an on-line consultation with some sector such as the agri-food, transport, mining and telecommunications' sectors on barriers to international trade. Capacity of training and advisory services feature in the on-line consultation.

Bullet 2

Information on training programmes and providers for SME internationalisation is publicly available.

SMEs keen on building or extending their international trading need to have ready access to information on training; and who provides this training. The training information could be centralized within a recognised website (SME agency or international section of a Ministry of Economy or Ministry for Trade) or it could be sign-posted from a general website with hyperlinks to specific training provider organisations. If the latter, this would already satisfy this bullet.

Level 3

Bullet 1

Training on SME internalisation is an integral part of national policy.

Bullet 3 requires that a policy position has been taken on training for internationalisation of SMEs. For the purposes of this bullet, examples of national policy could be:

- National development plan includes provisions for increasing export potential of businesses - includes upgrading of trade missions, training and advisory services;
- SME strategy has a pillar on SME training, including training for SMEs to export;
- A national trade promotion strategy gives particular mention to SME potential to trade in regional markets, including the EU, and includes training provisions.

Bullet 2

Training is available for SME internationalisation in at least 2 key economic sectors.

This bullet requires examples of training available (or have been available since the last SBA assessment) in 2 key economic sectors. Key economic sectors could be identified within a government strategy for trade, economic development programme, national development programme or SME strategy, bi-lateral trade cooperation protocol.

Examples of evidence for this bullet:

- A one-day training programme for SMEs in the textiles sector on business opportunities in EU single market organised by Ministry of Economy. Evidence: agenda and list of participants. The textiles sector is one of the priority sectors in National Strategy for Economic Development.
- A National Association for the Food & Beverages sector in association with the Embassy of China runs a 4-module training programme every year for women entrepreneurs on doing business with China. The modules cover cultural communication, Chinese legislation, labelling and standards, customs clearance, and payments and dispute resolution. Evidence: website notification of training, copy of training programme, list of participants from most recent training (at least in previous 24 months). The agri-food sector is listed as one of the priority sectors in the national development plan.

Bullet 3

Public funding available for training for SME internationalisation.

This bullet requires evidence of government funding for training. Examples of funding could be:

- A finance allocation within a regional development programme specifically dedicated to training for SME internationalisation and implemented by a regional development agency;
- The national innovation agency finances development of e-learning for SMEs in the ICT sector focused on SMES either trading, with or with potential to trade, internationally;
- The Ministry of Economy supports training on standards and conformity for textile manufacturers (50% financed by international donor, 50% self-financing by SMEs) to improve capacity to export and compete in the EU single market.

Level 4

Bullet 1

Training for SME internationalisation is available on-line for SMEs operating in at least two key economic sectors.

This bullet requires evidence that SMEs have access to on-line training. What is important here is that on-line training provision specifically reflects at least two key sectors of the national economy (see see Level3, Bullet 2 above). Examples of on-line training could be:

- A National Pharmaceutical Association (with 50% financing from the Ministry of Trade) ran a webinar for SMEs on access to the European single market (also available to SMEs in

neighbouring countries). These sessions include a) on-line presentations or interviews with experts, b) case studies on how SMEs can get quicker and efficient access to markets in EU countries, and c) a self-planning template of action points to support SMEs in developing an EU business extension plan;

- An Enterprise Development Association (state agency) has been mandated by the Ministry of Economy to support women-owned SMEs in widening and diversifying the external markets. The garments sector where women's SMEs are already competitive in the national economy was identified as one sector with export growth potential. A programme comprising training, trade missions and on-line coaching provides support to women's businesses.

Bullet 2

Up to 20% of SMEs working in at least two key economic sectors have participated in training on SME internationalisation since the last SBA assessment.

The data requirements for this bullet ideally would be available from sector organisations or a national ministry responsible for trade, industry or SME development. The data could be comprehensive (exact data on SMEs participating in training within a sector) or sample-based. This bullet requires evidence of at least 20% SMEs having followed training in each of the chosen key economic sectors (see Level 3, Bullet 2 above).

Level 5

Bullet 1

At least 30% of SMEs working in the key economic sectors have participated in training for SME internationalisation since the last SBA assessment.

This bullet raises the data requirements for Level 4, Bullet 2 to 30% but it also time-bound. Data should demonstrate that 30% of SMEs in any two key economic sectors have followed training in the period since the last SBA assessment.

The data requirements for this bullet ideally would be available from sector organisations or a national ministry responsible for trade, industry or SME development. The data could be comprehensive (exact data on SMEs participating in training within a sector) or sample-based. This bullet requires evidence of at least 30% SMEs having followed training in each of the chosen key economic sectors.

Bullet 2

Half of the above sample have extended their activities to international markets.

This bullet requires evidence of impact: those companies that have engaged training specifically addressing internationalisation (in the country's key economic sectors) have extended sales to international markets. Data to support this bullet may come from training providers, SME surveys, sector associations, SME support organisations, national statistics offices.

Examples of businesses that have improved sales performance and which would feature in this data area:

- Through mentoring support by entrepreneurs within the European Enterprise Network on product improvement, an SME used the EEN to get access to new markets in 3 EU countries;
- 15 SMEs participating in an innovation programme with a technology university improved quality of production. This innovation programme focused on international environmental standards and allowed the businesses to access international markets.

Bullet 3

Recommendations from an evaluation of training for SME internationalisation have been followed up.

This bullet addresses evaluation of training for SME internationalisation and, in particular, how the recommendations made by independent evaluations have been acted upon.

Examples of evidence:

- An evaluation of a cross-border cooperation programme recommended the promotion of twinning between businesses in common sectors for knowledge-sharing purposes. An SME network with a dedicated on-line platform has been established amongst businesses from both sides of the border and where know-how exchange between businesses takes place;
- A review of an SME programme supporting business internationalisation highlighted the need to help businesses to determine what support they required to enter foreign markets. An export toolkit was elaborated to allow businesses to determine if, how and when the business should internationalise. This included options for training and know-how transfer;
- Recommendations from an evaluation of SMEs in the transport sector underlined the need for more developed support for training on environmental protection. The National Road Hauliers' Association, in cooperation with a technology university, elaborated and delivered a series of seminars addressed to road hauliers.

Good Practice

A good practice is attached at Annex 4 demonstrating some of the key features of this indicator, in particular how the monitoring and evaluation of the training practice has impacted on business performance, including further policy interest from government leading to a widening of the programme.

Annex 1

List of National SBA Coordinators

Algeria	Mr	Telailia	Abdellah	Ministère de l'industrie et des mines	Directeur d'Etudes, et Coordinateur National Charte/SBA	ahrasdz@yahoo.fr ab_telailia@yahoo.fr
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Annex 2.

Good practice - entrepreneurial learning

School-Enterprise (Scuola-Impresa): Cometa Formazione, Italy

Introduction

Across Europe, the school drop-out rate is a cause for concern. In Italy, in 2013, the drop-out rate was 17% - well above the Europe 2020 target of 10%. The number of young people not in employment, education and training (NEET) increased from 26% in 2013 from 22.7% in 2011. In the province of Como, the drop-out rate is higher still at 30%. And while the unemployment rate for the area is 9%, for NEETs this rises to over 25%.

The School-Enterprise offers experiential learning as a means of connecting young people with the world of work and introducing a real job experience in the classroom which has a positive impact on students' attitudes to both work and study. A key component of the programme imbedded within the vocational curriculum is entrepreneurship promotion and practical business skills.

The programme is implemented in three vocational subjects: catering, furniture and textiles.

Objective

The objective of the programme are to support the employability of young people. Young people are provided with training to develop their skills and apply them to produce goods and services for the market. On completion of the programme, young people have the chance to take up apprenticeships or start their own business.

Target group

The School-Enterprise provides training and education to students who are particularly at risk from dropping out of school. The school also targets students with disabilities, unemployed young adults and young immigrants.

Training needs are assessed against the skills and competences of the local industry, as most of the students are from the region and will be employed locally. The school has developed a strong and active network of artisans and local businesses. The school management, the artisans (Master Craftsman) together with representatives of local businesses are formulating the training programme according to their needs.

The training design

A general training plan is developed which includes a schedule of training, organised in modules, definition of skills that need to be developed and the activities that support the development of these skills. From these, personal training plans are developed for each student.

Training is firmly centred on work-based needs. For example, all courses are taught in the context of the student's chosen subject. For example, for a student enrolled on a fashion design course, all mathematics classes are taught in the context of fashion design and sales. This demonstrates how the entrepreneurship key competence is embedded in the standard school curricula.

Work-based learning is a predominant feature of the training design. In the carpentry school, students rotate between tasks designed to teach skills and act as apprentices to highly-skilled craftsmen. All tasks contribute to products or services required in the local market that are sold on-line or directly from the school.

Work-based learning is reinforced through internships in industry – usually for two months. The school has partnerships with more than 650 companies in the Como area, covering the following sectors: handicrafts, hospitality, textile and tourism.

Internships are secured through the network of local employers who are consulted as part of the training needs assessment. The students learn all parts of the business by rotating between the different departments connected with the production. The blend of entrepreneurship key competences and business skills make up an excellent entrepreneurial learning package in the vocational education drive. Further, the rotation within the business allows the young people to determine which part of a business they enjoy most and helps with career planning.

The school has also been able to develop some partnerships with international companies, notably the Inditex Group (Zara and Bershka), Starwood Hotels, Accor, NH Hotels, Kairos and Partners Sgr, Vodafone, DHL and Zurich Group Italia.

Training environment

Learning and work are combined to take place in the school. For example, students training in catering work alongside teachers and professional catering staff to operate a bar and a restaurant on site at the school which is open to the public. In this way, students learn both the vocational and commercial skills through the school programme. Observation is considered an important factor in peer learning. Students are expected to observe one another as well as qualified professionals in the performance of work tasks.

Teacher training is important. Teachers are regularly updated on latest developments in their vocational area as well as on new pedagogical and modern teaching methods. In this respect, a group of teachers have followed a training on innovative teaching methods at the Northwestern University of Chicago. Further, teachers are in regular contact with a VET college in Boston to receive on-line mentoring on pedagogical methods.

To ensure that the simultaneous learning and working model runs smoothly, teachers must demonstrate effective organisational and managerial skills to manage not only learning but also a real world production process. This programme requires a high ratio of staff to learners, currently 1:3.

Monitoring, evaluation and impact

The student's personal training plan is used to record all the activities and results in order to have a continuous monitoring of how the student is developing. Part of the process includes regular meetings between the student and the tutor to assess progress.

At the end of the programme, the school and Master Craftsman assess whether and to what extent the apprentice has reached the goals identified in the training programme (employability, qualification or specific level of competences). The final evaluation is based on the real "work-performance" in order to concretely assess the competences. All graduates are tracked after having left the school for six months to evaluate employability status.

An external evaluation of the training programme is being undertaken in 2016 by the Politecnico di Milano.

Implications for policy and practice

The Region of Lombardia considered The School-Enterprise as a good practice and reference point for other schools in integrating 'learning by doing' into the curriculum. The programme is also noted for school-business cooperation. The school liaises directly with the elected representative of the Region of Lombardia responsible for education and training. Expertise and experience from the school have been integrated within the region's policy on work-based learning. The School-Enterprise Good Practice has been included in the national law "La Buona Scuola"(July 2015).

? What makes the training programme stand out?

Key learning points for training providers and policy makers from this good practice are:

- ★ **Learning package:** combination of school-based vocational skills training and entrepreneurship apprenticeship in local companies, resulting in products and services for the market;
- ★ **Teacher support:** personalised learning path for each student with a 1:3 ratio of teachers to students;
- ★ **Entrepreneurship key competence:** the entrepreneurship key competence is embedded in the training programme and across all vocational and general school curriculum;
- ★ **School-business cooperation:** a pedagogic resource centre brings teachers and entrepreneurs together to develop curriculum and assessment.

The School-Enterprise has an autonomous budget and profit is re-invested in education as provided by law. The programme costs are approximately EUR 7000 per student per year.

As a Vocational Training School recognised by the Region of Lombardia, the school receives public funds. In addition, the school also receives external funds through several projects and sponsoring and therefore the school is gaining a stronger economic independence.

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Annex 3.

Women's entrepreneurship training - good practice

Female High Fliers Programme, Ryan Academy, Dublin City University. Ireland

Background

The Irish government is giving increasing attention to women's entrepreneurship through tackling the barriers to women's business development, the identification and promotion of women entrepreneur role models, targeted events and awards and support for women entrepreneur networks. A Competitive Start-up Fund finances women's start-ups.

The Ryan Academy runs a number of education and accelerator programmes for entrepreneurs, including a programme known as Propeller Venture Accelerator Programme – aimed at start-up companies in the technology sector. It developed expertise in the needs of early stage entrepreneurs and attracted a valuable community of mentors and investors who advise and provide contacts and finance to start-ups. However, the lion's share of applications to the 'Propeller' programme have come from men. Research on start-ups led by women shows that early stage entrepreneurial activity among men is more than twice that of women.

Moreover, in Ireland the gender gap is growing with men as early stage entrepreneurs nine times more likely than women to have significant growth ambitions. These issues were raised by DCU Ryan Academy with a number of potential partners, including Enterprise Ireland and business. All expressed interest in fostering and promoting women's entrepreneurship in Ireland. The Female High Fliers Programme is a direct response to the policy concerns raised above and is financially supported by Enterprise Ireland. The Female Propeller Programme forms an integral part of the DCU Ryan Academy's corporate strategy alongside their accelerator programmes for tech companies and students.

Overview and target group

The Female High Fliers Programme is an accelerator programme for women-led start-ups. The programme's objective is to fast-track women entrepreneurs, their leadership skills and their businesses. It includes a comprehensive programme of workshops, bespoke mentoring and networking opportunities.

While the Academy draws on the experience the wider ‘Propeller’ programme (voted 7th best accelerator in Europe by Kauffman Foundation), it tackles the challenges specific to women entrepreneurs. These include lack of role models, low self-confidence and lower levels of risk taking, lack of technical expertise and limited access to appropriate networking opportunities. It also addresses the issue of lack of women angel investors and encourages more women to consider investing in start-ups led by women.

The primary target group of this programme is women founders of start-ups that are less than five years old. Both individuals and teams may apply. All companies must be women-led, with at least 51% women’s ownership.

Objective

The programme objective is to help women entrepreneurs to build businesses of scale and create employment opportunities.

The assessment of training needs is conducted through research by the Ryan Academy, assessment of experience and expertise of participants and input from Irish state agencies and companies on women and the economy. Applications for participation on the Female High Fliers Programme are submitted online.

The training design

The training curriculum is designed in consultation with Enterprise Ireland and other training partners. Training partners are selected on the basis of their extensive experience of dealing with high-potential start-ups and women entrepreneurs, in particular. Input on the curriculum design also comes from corporate partners and sponsors, particularly as regards mentoring and networking events. The programme is delivered one day per week over 13 weeks. Participants work on their business and on their own skills. Workshops focus on the business employing the business model canvass as a framework to help participants develop the essential building blocks and scalability of their company. The programme supported development of participants’ personal skills (e.g. confidence building) through one-to-one coaching and communication workshops. Additional workshops to complement curriculum in areas such as finance, legal issues and digital marketing, as well as one-to-one sessions with experts on venture capital funding and corporate tax are offered to participants. The training is supplemented by monthly networking events during and after the programme ends.

Mentoring plays a large part in the programme overall. Mentors provide support and advice to the companies in areas such as production, finance, marketing, investment, exporting. A networking dinner towards the end of a programme provides companies with an opportunity to meet some of the most senior business women in Ireland. The programme culminates in a “Demo Day” where all trainees pitch their business to a network of DCU Ryan Academy mentors and investors with a view to seeking future funding which then goes to the winning company. An investment award of €50,000 is an attractive incentive to participants and helps to generate media interest in the programme.

The training environment

Training is provided by specialised and qualified trainers. As well as the in-classroom training, the curriculum includes support services to participants including a personal effectiveness report for each participant. This is followed by a one-to-one coaching session. All programme participants are registered on an online platform that helps to guide participants through the 'Lean LaunchPad' methodology and to prepare the business model canvass. Participants submit 'homework' online each week. This includes records of meetings with potential customers, mentors and investors.

Monitoring, evaluation and impact

Programme participants are continuously assessed. An exit assessment of participants is conducted within 6 months of programme completion. Participants are surveyed anonymously after the programme. The results of this assessment, along with the continuous feedback provided by the participants during the programme, are compiled into a report which is presented to the national enterprise agency - Enterprise Ireland.

Implications for policy and practice

The DCU Ryan Academy programme works closely with its key sponsor – Enterprise Ireland to ensure that support to women's entrepreneurship reflects key policy concerns. Further, evidence from the programme has highlighted that a higher proportion of the start-ups led by women are in sectors not currently supported by Enterprise Ireland. The agency has responded by ensuring wider access of women to its support services.

? What makes the training programme stand out?

The Academy is a not-for-profit partnership between Dublin City University and the airline company Ryanair. Its aim is to be a leading supporter of entrepreneurship and innovation in Ireland. Factors which make the training programme stand out include:

- ★ **Leadership and visibility:** a leading European company (Ryanair) provides high-profile support to the Female High Fliers;
- ★ **Impact:** Female High Fliers Programme has assisted a total of 24 companies over a period of three years. To date, these companies have raised €5.1million in follow-on funding and created 83 jobs;

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- ★ **Link between training and access to finance:** participants benefit from established investor and mentor networks which form part of the wider Propeller Venture Accelerator Programme;
- ★ **Sustainability:** working in partnership with other organisations including Enterprise Ireland, private sector companies (e.g. Paypal, Ulster Bank and Vodafone) and investment funds (e.g. Frontline Venture and Atlantic Bridge) is an important factor in sustaining and further developing the programme. Media interest in both the programme and the participating companies is also a factor in ensuring that the programme is recognised.

Budget

Enterprise Ireland provides a grant (multi-annual funding) of €50,000 per annum.

Annex 4.

Training for internationalisation of SMEs – good practice

International Growth Programme: Enterprise Lithuania and Giraffe Consulting (UK)

Background

While low oil prices and trade restrictions on Russia have left their mark on Lithuania's export performance, policymakers are upbeat about continued growth in domestic demand as well as trade improvements, particularly with EU countries.ⁱ Hard hit by the financial crisis which saw GDP contract by 15% in 2009, Lithuania's economy has rebounded and is one of the fastest growing in the EU. Growth projections are 2.9% for 2016 rising to 3.6% by 2020.ⁱⁱ At 9.7%, jobless figures have considerably improved since the height of the financial crisis when unemployment peaked at 18%. The country's vision for 2030 includes a dynamic and highly-skilled talent pool to support the country in the global economy.ⁱⁱⁱ

Business performance is pivotal to national growth and employment - the centre piece of EU's '2020' development strategy.^{iv} Businesses with an international profile (e.g. importing or exporting) tend to be more innovative and productive with greater growth and job creation potential.^v In its bid to boost the export potential of SMEs, Enterprise Lithuania established the International Growth Programme to train SMEs with high-growth potential to trade in European and world markets. Training is important in getting businesses to trade internationally. The ETF supports its partner countries in improving SME training which is a core feature of the EU's Small Business Act for Europe. Sharing good practice in training helps policymakers and training providers bring value to the training market and wider economy.

i. Central Bank of the Republic of Lithuania (2015). Lithuanian Economic Review. December 2015 <http://bit.ly/1PCRYGK>

ii. International Monetary Fund (2015). World Economic Outlook: Adjusting to Lower Commodity Prices. Washington (October). <http://bit.ly/1OerBmr>

iii. Kubilius, A. (2015). Lithuania 2030: cycling into the future. LSE European Institute – APCO Worldwide Perspectives on Europe Series. <http://bit.ly/1XxZtC2>

iv. European Commission (2010). Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Communication from the European Commission. Brussels 3.3.2010. <http://bit.ly/KMnOnV>

v. See, European Commission (2010). Internationalisation of European SMEs. Final Report. Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry. Entrepreneurship Unit. Brussels, 2010. <http://bit.ly/1KWOrOa> and Blackburn, R. (2012). Export to Expand: the key to small business growth in the UK. Small Business Research Centre, Kingston University. <http://bit.ly/1R6v1wf>

The training programme

Objective

The objective of the training programme is to reinforce Lithuania's export growth through strengthening the capacity of SMEs to identify, enter and develop business in European and international markets.

Target groups

The training programme focuses on SMEs or micro enterprises that can demonstrate the experience, resources, suitability of product/services and commitment to export. Participants in the training can be businesses with some export experience or those keen to export.

The training programme is also open to staff from Lithuania's SME agency (Enterprise Lithuania) and recent university graduates following a wider management programme led by Enterprise Lithuania.

How were the training needs assessed?

Firstly, research undertaken by Enterprise Lithuania underlines how SMEs and trade missions are not prepared for international trade. Secondly, on-line questionnaires submitted by individual companies identify level of interest, knowledge and skills for exporting. Next, interviews with prospective participants further defines the training needs set against the sector, company size and market interests. Finally, during the delivery of the training modules, as well as through individual coaching on a trade mission, support to participants is further customised to the specific needs of their businesses.

The training design

The training programme in Lithuania lasts 10 days. It consists of five modules covering all aspects of the SME exporting and international sales. The programme provides training for SMEs preparing for, and doing business, in international markets.

After following the training, participants are able to:

- ★ articulate their firm's business model and value proposition in export markets;
- ★ use international market research to screen and select international markets and business partners;
- ★ apply frameworks to inform the decision on optimal method of market entry and development;
- ★ identify preferred options for the firm's pricing strategy and for getting paid;
- ★ compile and present a realistic budgeted plan for business development in international markets;
- ★ communicate confidently with international customers and / or business partners.

The programme comprises the following learning methods and tools:

- ★ case studies, including video media;
- ★ guest speakers for specific modules;
- ★ practical exercises to track understanding and skills in each module as well as peer learning exchanges;
- ★ learning-by-doing through international trade missions with coaching support.

Each participating company develops its own individual Export Growth and Development Plan. This is drafted and improved across the timeframe of the five modules at the company's headquarters. This ensures that important intelligence and knowledge from the wider company is used to shape the plan.

All training participants share the final drafts of their Export Growth and Development Plans during training sessions for know-how exchange.

The ten companies with the strongest Export Growth and Development Plans are selected to take part in an organised trade mission to their chosen market. This includes meetings with potential customers and/or business partners. At the start of the trade mission, the companies receive further training covering more advanced topics on internationalisation and sales. This includes direct coaching to company representatives in the sales process with export customers, and sales role-play in a 'real life' context.

Training Environment

All trainers are experts in international trade with over 20 years' first-hand experience of doing business in international markets. Training is delivered at hotels in Vilnius with good audio-visual and internet facilities which are used in the modules and exercises. All learning materials are made available in hard copy and electronic format.

Monitoring, evaluation and impact

All SMEs that participate in the training programme are tracked by Enterprise Lithuania for five years for both quantitative and qualitative improvements in business performance. Improved performance of companies that have followed the training include 10.7% increase in foreign sales at one company; and a 46% increase in employment at another firm over 3 years following its participation in the International Growth Programme.

Implications for policy and practice

The success of the International Growth Programme has prompted Enterprise Lithuania to extend its training activities in two areas as part of its wider 'Export Academy'. Firstly, it has established a 'leadership academy' that includes owners and CEOs of companies that have followed the International Growth Programme. The objective is to reinforce the capacity of Lithuania's exporting companies and build a 'strong community' of high-performing, enterprise role models. Secondly, keen to build a next generation of young people to be hired into SMEs with export potential, Enterprise Lithuania has established the 'Wings' training programme. This allows young graduates from technical, business and arts faculties to learn key aspects of export management through in-company work placements. Wings trainees may also follow the modules of the International Growth Programme.

? What makes the training stand out?

Key learning points for training providers and policymakers from this good practice are:

- ★ **mixed pedagogic paradigm:** the programme involves a mix of learning methods including classic instruction, individual and group exercises, one-to-one coaching and learning by doing;
- ★ **learning extension:** the success of the SME export training has generated further opportunities in training through leadership training for company owners and apprenticeship options for young graduates to develop export skills;
- ★ **training meets national policy priorities:** training provision specifically responds to the Lithuanian government's objective of putting learning at the centre of its efforts to build a dynamic economy to meet global competition.

Budget

The average cost per company is roughly €5,500 with companies paying 1,000 of this sum. Companies also pay the costs of travel, accommodation and subsistence for the trade mission.

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