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Entrepreneurial competences in economical engineering curriculum in Romania

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Abstract

Since 2014, when the entrepreneurship education became a strategic direction for the EU policies in education, the EU has been providing increasing support to national policymakers in education, to universities and schools, in order to improve their approaches in entrepreneurship education. In 2016, the EntreComp Framework was launched, being not only a landmark for the public authorities but also a tool for analyzing the entrepreneurial orientation of various curricula. This paper aims to make an analysis of the current curriculum for bachelor degree from a faculty, from the perspective of the EntreComp framework, through a comparative method. The intention is to point out the gap between what is already being taught and what should be taught regarding entrepreneurship as a transversal competence and to question the framework's level that the faculty should aim for through its curriculum.

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1. Introduction

During the last decades, research has proven that there is a strong, positive, relation, on one hand, between the development and the dynamics of the SMEs' sector and the sustainability and competitiveness of the national,

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European and international economy (Keskin et al., 2010), and, on the other hand, between the entrepreneurial competencies of the business owners, manager and employees and the success of an SME (Tehseen and Ramayah, 2015).

Following this relation, several policies were developed at EU level in the fields of SMEs and education, both in initial training and in long-life learning.

Entrepreneurship is as an individual's ability to turn ideas into action, to be innovative, to take the initiative, to take risks, to plan and manage projects with a view to achieving objectives. By definition, entrepreneurial competencies should be learnt by all the people, regardless of their current position in business or their professional prospects if they are still studying, as entrepreneurial competencies are crucial for the success of any kind of activity.

Entrepreneurial education must be considered nowadays an important instrument to address the challenges of the 21st Century. The European Commission has been focusing on promoting the learning about entrepreneurship from primary school through to university and considers that the success of the European Union in meeting the challenges of competitiveness and economic growth depends on dynamic entrepreneurship (Soare, 2016). In this respect, young people to entrepreneurship develops their initiative and helps them to be more creative and self-confident in whatever they undertake and to act in a socially responsible way (EU, 2004). Moreover, since 2006, entrepreneurship has been one of the eight key-competencies for lifelong learning in the modern, knowledge-based society, starting to be included by the Member States in their policies in the field of education.

The Commission recommendations include the necessity for Member States to develop more systematic strategies to promote entrepreneurship training through: a) a coherent framework; b) support for schools; c) fostering entrepreneurship in higher education; d) support for teachers; e) participation by external actors and businesses; f) practical experience (EU 2006).

Furthermore, in 2016 EU developed Entrepreneurship Competence Framework, also known as *EntreComp*, which offers a tool to improve the entrepreneurial capacity of European citizens and organizations. The framework aims to build consensus around a common understanding of entrepreneurship competence by defining 3 competence areas, a list of 15 competences, learning out-comes and proficiency levels, which current and future initiatives can refer to (EU, 2016). *EntreComp* could be considered as additional support provided by the EU to public authorities (including universities) and private actors to improve their guidance, training and mentoring services for young people and job seekers, and at the same time further an entrepreneurial mindset among citizens. (EU, 2016).

This paper aims to make an analysis of the current curriculum of faculty for bachelor degree from the perspective of the *EntreComp* framework, through a comparative method, to point out the gap between what is already being taught and what should be taught regarding entrepreneurship as a transversal competence and to question the framework's level that the faculty should aim for through its curriculum.

2. *EntreCom* framework

The framework describes entrepreneurship as a transversal competence, which can be applied by citizens to all spheres of life, from nurturing personal development, to actively participating in society, to (re)entering the job market as an employee or as a self-employed person, and to starting up ventures of any kind, cultural, social or commercial (EU, 2016).

The conceptual model of the framework consists of two main dimensions: the 3 competence areas and the 15 competencies.

The 3 competencies areas are: Ideas & Opportunities, Resources and Into Action. The interconnections between the 3 areas reflects the definition of entrepreneurship. They were integrated in the framework to stress entrepreneurship competence as the ability to transform ideas and opportunities into action by attracting and using resources.

The 15 competencies, are named and briefly explained through descriptors in the *EntreComp Conceptual Model*. Each competence is divided in 3 up to 6 threads and then each thread explained in dynamics on 4 levels of proficiency in the *EntreComp Progression Model*. In the *Full EntreComp Framework*, the threads of the 15 competences are detailed in 442 learning outcomes on 8 levels.

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