
Policy Stakeholder Lunch Roundtable

The Launch of the Entrepreneurial Skills Pass

The European passport to train, work and start-up

Brussels, March 4th 2015

Lack of vital job skills and a low level of entrepreneurial competences among the European youth are among the key factors contributing to rising levels of youth unemployment in Europe. Changing the education system and providing young people with financial literacy and problem solving skills are strategic actions to tackle this issue. Initiatives such as the Entrepreneurial Skills Pass are considered strategic to provide young people with the skills they need and give employers an EU-wide certified standard that meets the requirements for qualified employees.

These were the topics of a high-level roundtable gathering more than 50 policy stakeholders from the public and private sector organised by JA-YE Europe and its partners (WKO, Foundation for Entrepreneurship - Young Enterprise Denmark, CSR Europe) and supported by Visa Europe.



MEP **Petra Kammerevert** and MEP **Jutta Steinruck** jointly hosted the event. Representing the Committee on Culture and Education and the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, they gave an overview of the political and social context.

Petra Kammerevert, as Coordinator of the Committee on Culture and Education, underlined that education is the most important factor for the future of our youth in Europe. Education systems need to ensure a good balance between theory and practice, because there is no action without knowledge and no practice without theory.

MEP Petra Kammerevert
S&D Coordinator of the Committee on Culture and Education





Jutta Steinruck, as coordinator of Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, said that to inspire and prepare young people for the labour market is today more important than ever. It is one of the key issues for a sustainable job market. Fighting youth unemployment is a key social element to exit the crisis.

MEP Jutta Steinruck

S&D Coordinator of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

The core of the event was a roundtable on the **role of entrepreneurial learning in enhancing financial literacy and problem solving skills**. **Christophe Leclercq**, Board Member of JA-YE Europe and Founder of Euractiv.com, was acting as moderator.



The European Commission, represented by **Marko Curavić**, believes that we need to bring entrepreneurship into schools' curriculum if we want a cultural change in Europe. As underlined also by **Adele Atkinson** from OECD, financial literacy is an important element to make entrepreneurship education more effective. Our students are very good in managing projects, but often they fail in financial aspects of their business ideas. This is also the view of the private sector, represented by **Nick Jones** from Visa Europe, who said we need to drive forward entrepreneurship education and financial literacy, especially in the digital economy. Our children will probably not touch coins and money due to the digitalization of the markets. Therefore, young people need financial skills to live and work in a digital economy. Big corporations as well as SMEs are key to foster entrepreneurial education according to **Ben Butters**, representing EUROCHAMBRES. They can make the difference by bringing expertise, time and motivation to young people and teachers in schools.

According to the two cabinets attending the event, organisations providing entrepreneurship education are fully supported by the European Commission. As education lies in the hands of national ministers, implementation is key, said **Rodrigo Ballester** from the Cabinet of Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. The concept was underlined also by **Max Strotmann**, speaking on behalf of the cabinet of Andrus Ansip, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market. Organisations like JA-YE Europe can help Member States in reforming their school curriculum, innovating the teaching methods and implementing EU recommendations.





Trudy Norris-Grey from Microsoft presented the **Entrepreneurial Skills Pass (ESP)**. An international qualification on the skills and competences students acquire through entrepreneurship education. Participants are asked to self-assess their progress on key parameters - including creativity, perseverance, self-confidence and teamwork ability - at the start, half-way and at the end of the process, and are then subjected to an online exam about business, economics and finance knowledge.

According to **Jo Deblare**, Chair of JA-YE Europe Board and Chief Operating Officer of Accenture, all stakeholders at the event recognised the importance of such initiative because we need to prove that entrepreneurship education works.



In this framework ESP:

- Is a step further to a more qualified youth
- Targets students when they are still at school
- Helps to measure the impact of entrepreneurship education and effectively changes the education systems.

By obtaining an ESP students demonstrate they hold the necessary knowledge, skills and competences to start a business or be successfully employed. For businesses, supporting ESP means helping create the qualified young workers and entrepreneurs of tomorrow.

Is the Entrepreneurial Skills Pass working? It has to work. However, to do so, it needs to be recognised by small and large businesses, top higher education institutions and international organisations. **Players across Europe are called to take action, join the Entrepreneurial Skills Pass and cooperate to raise the bar on youth employability by:**



ENGAGING: Become a volunteer

SUPPORTING: Sponsor a student

RECOGNISING: Open a door to further opportunities

