

# Incentives & Education for Entrepreneurship in Italy

The research represents a data analysis of the country reality and the incentives provided in Italy by public and private institutions, addressed to people/youngsters to facilitate their path to become entrepreneurs. The research included an analysis of the Italian educational system with a focus on all different kinds of entrepreneurship skills it does and does not teach, in order to form an assessment on the opportunities of entrepreneurship in Italy.

For further detailed information on each topic discussed, please refer to the references page.

*The analysis of this data does not represent the official representation of any other party, organization, government, or union. The responsibility of the interpretation and statements made in this research fall solely on the author.*

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 About the Project “Entrepreneurship Tool HUB”

This research was created within the framework of the **Entrepreneurship Tool HUB** Capacity Building project in the field of Youth – Eastern Partnership – Erasmus + Programme.

The project aims to promote greater quality within the Entrepreneurial education by developing innovative tools based on the interests of young people and addressing the skills demands and global tendencies.

The aim shall be achieved through the following objectives: - Raise awareness and find ways to make the entrepreneurial learning innovative, creative and attractive to young people; - Identify best practices alongside the needs and challenges linked to entrepreneurial education in participating countries (through conducting 6 National Researches); -Develop Non Formal education tools and board games to be used in any education system and adapted to local situations and needs; -Develop 10 online tools and gamification of entrepreneurial learning through software creation; - Promote the use of NFE methods, board games and eLearning tools during work with young people in the area of entrepreneurial education at local level; - Share the experience in regard to the entire project implementation therefore strengthening the good results achieved, valuing the deliverables and assessing the actual extant of the project outcomes; - Create an E-learning platform to share best practices, national reports, NFE tools and methods developed, board games, E-learning tools, resources, initiatives, ideas additionally contributing to strengthening of the learning outcomes.

**Entrepreneurship Tool Hub** is a multi-measure initiative involving 6 youth organisations, 3 from EU countries (Slovakia, Italy and Poland) and 3 from Eastern Partnership countries (Moldova, Georgia and Armenia) . It consists of 14 capacity building activities (kick off meeting, 6 national research, Creative Hackathon and 6 dissemination local events) and 2 mobilities (Training Course to develop NFE Tools and board games and Seminar to share, value and extend the outcomes).

## 1.2 Guidelines

The research was done under the guidelines to involve stakeholders of the education system, business sector, local/national authorities and young people in order to identify best practices alongside the needs and challenges on the topic of entrepreneurial education. The aim of the research is to seek possible solutions for transforming the needs and challenges into visions and actions.

## 1.3 Methodology

All the research involved in this analysis is a mix of secondary and tertiary research. The main sources of information derived to this research comes from Eurydice, Entrecomp and the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM).

## 2. Entrepreneurship Competence Framework

The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework is a publication by the Joint Research Centre, which conducts scientific research on behalf of the European Commission in order to aid EU overall policy.

This research was chosen to establish a base definition when talking about entrepreneurial goals and competences in order to institute the growth for the concept of entrepreneurship.

“EntreComp defines entrepreneurship as a transversal competence, which applies 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 also to starting up ventures (cultural, social or commercial)”. This is the framework that this analysis will use whenever mentioning the concept of entrepreneurship.



*15 key competences of an entrepreneurial mindset by EntreComp*

This analysis will focus mostly on the development of competences defined by EntreComp under the section of “taking action”; those include “taking the initiative”, “planning & management”, “coping with ambiguity, uncertainty & risk”, “working with others” and “learning through experience”.

For the “resources” section including “self-awareness & self-efficacy”, “motivation & perseverance”, “mobilising resources”, “financial & economy literacy” and “mobilising others”, the analysis is based on the Eurydice report of *Key Data on Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe – 2019* edition.

The “Ideas & opportunities” section of the competences, which includes “spotting opportunities”, “creativity”, “vision”, “valuing ideas” and “ethical and sustainable thinking”, will be presented through the initiatives available for youth in Italy and how it may affect the development of the entrepreneurial mindset.

### 3. Formal Education in Italy

According to a report by Eurydice called *Entrepreneurship Education: at School in Europe* (published 2016), “there is no current national strategy related to entrepreneurial education in Italy” in the context of formal education, that everyone is required to take. However, there are subjects in post-secondary education that focus on the development of entrepreneurial skills but only the students that take those courses in post secondary education get access to the conscious development of entrepreneurial skills. The provision of entrepreneurial education to youth falls on the external sources of education, non-formal education or vocational training.

In 2005 it was officially introduced on a national level the concept of dual learning, alternating between school and internship in post secondary education, especially in technical schools which focus on building practical skills to transition into the labor market. Through this, Italians have a greater opportunity to learn about the entrepreneurial mindset and learn through action in a workplace that will help them acquire skills for employment.

The formal education in Italy for elementary and secondary education does not have a curriculum in which they teach others how to behave and cooperate with peers in order to achieve a desired results; which has an unpredictable outcome on the ability of the students to effectively achieve the competences of “self-awareness and self-efficacy”, “mobilizing others”, and “working with others”. The responsibility of nurturing these competences falls on the students and their interaction with their peers in non-formal education or socialization activities that are not mandatory and without guidance to build on the competences.

Formal education in Italy seems to focus mostly on the “learning through experience” competence through its education in the technical schools. The choice to learn entrepreneurial skills falls on the individual that chooses the path in life which transitions through a technical school or an internship. Due to the main focus on “learning through experience”, the Italian education lacks the primary development of competences defined as “resources” and “ideas and opportunities”.

## 4. Incentive Programs

There are a couple of incentive programs in Italy that have achieved a result that related to upgrading the entrepreneurial competences proposed by Entrecomp. Some of them are:

### Enterprise in Action

<b>GOOD PRACTICE DESCRIPTION:</b>	Enterprise in Action
Country	Italy
Title of the Practice	Impresa in azione (Enterprise in Action)
Year	2016
Duration (the length of the practice)	Around 120 hours.
Organization (name(s) of the organization(s) involved)	Junior Achievement Italy
Reference (web sites etc)	<a href="http://www.jaitalia.org/proposte-didattiche/impresa-in-azione/?_sfm_fasciascolastica_acf=superiori">http://www.jaitalia.org/proposte-didattiche/impresa-in-azione/?_sfm_fasciascolastica_acf=superiori</a>

<b>GOOD PRACTICE APPLICATION:</b>	
Target Group	Young students between 16 and 19 years, attending years of high school.
Objectives of the Practice	To increase the entrepreneurial spirit of the participants through the development of positive

	<p>attitudes like sense of initiative, innovation and creativity.</p> <p>To prepare for the labour market, presenting models and practices, professional roles, fields that offer more employment opportunities.</p> <p>The development of financial and entrepreneurial skills contribute in raising employment prospects and reinforcing the hope for a better quality of life.</p> <p>Another objective is to help the students understand their passions and what they would like to do in the future.</p>
<p>Activity Description(short summary of the practice)</p>	<p><i>Impresa in azione</i> is a training program of entrepreneurial education in high schools that every year gets around 310.000 students involved.</p> <p>The participant classes create "mini-companies" and take care of their management, from the concept until launch on the market.</p> <p>This process puts the students in contact with companies and helps the development of technical and soft skills.</p> <p>It is officially recognised among the activities of the national program “Alternanza Scuola Lavoro”, the program for compulsory practical experience for high school students.</p>
<p>Methodology/Approach Steps (e-learning, workshop, team meeting etc.)</p>	<p>Each class will form an entrepreneurial team and create a “mini- company” with a managerial structure and specific roles, documents, rules and everything necessary to develop an idea (product, service, digital application...) and launch it into the market, creating a small activity. Among other steps, the student raise the necessary funding, do a market research, define the pricing strategy, create a brand and take care of its</p>

	<p>promotion. The students can choose the type of company and the field of work.</p> <p>50% of the time is used for practical activities, directly in contact with professionals, companies, institutions and other local, national or international realities.</p> <p>There is also the participation of a "Dream Coach" that guides the team in the process</p>
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<b>GOOD PRACTICE OUTCOMES:</b>	
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	<p>In the academic year 2016/2017 around 800 classes took part in the project and, thanks to this experience, 750 new enterprise ideas have been developed, and some of them have already been registered as companies.</p> <p>Thanks to the program, the participant students acquire a mix of skills and abilities such as teamworking, taking risks, responsibility, sense of initiative, creativity, negotiation and self-confidence.</p> <p>The participants receive the Entrepreneurial Skills Pass certification, recognised at a European level that testify the competencies they acquired.</p>
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### InnovActionLab

<b>GOOD PRACTICE DESCRIPTION:</b>	InnovActionLab
Country	Italy
Title of the Practice	InnovActionLab



Year	2013/2014
Duration (the length of the practice)	6 months
Organization (name(s) of the organization(s) involved)	InnovActionLab
Reference (web sites etc)	<a href="http://www.innovactionlab.org/">http://www.innovactionlab.org/</a>

<b>GOOD PRACTICE APPLICATION:</b>	
Target Group	Mostly university students and recent graduates
Objectives of the Practice	To create a start-up from scratch, to promote the participants' projects to the best international investors. Its main aim is contribute to the development of the entrepreneurial spirit of the participants.
Activity Description (short summary of the practice)	<p>InnovAction Lab is a training activity mainly (but not only) for university students and recent graduates.</p> <p>The course consists of classes, pitch tests, presentations and everything connected to each step to go from the business idea to the market.</p> <p>The participants are divided in team and each team has to work on a business idea and develop it from scratch, with a mentorship session that guides them in the creation of a start-up.</p>
Methodology/Approach Steps (e-	Workshops, team meetings and a lot of practice. The course is based on learning by doing and the

learning, workshop, team meeting etc.)	participants spend over 75% of their time with private investors and first generation entrepreneurs. Mentorship sessions are provided in order to help the participants to develop their business ideas.
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<b>GOOD PRACTICE OUTCOMES:</b>	
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	<p>According to the replies of the interviewed people, communication is the skill, which was developed the most during the course; second, one is leadership with a very high evaluation. In addition, the development of ICT skills is considered good.</p> <p>The course has also helped the creation of connections between participants, investors and entrepreneurs which can evolve in future professional collaborations.</p> <p>In 4 Years of activity, the course gave life to 40 Startup, €5+ Mn of equity were raised and there are now 800+ Alumni. It helped to create 150 jobs.</p>
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### La scuola di bollenti spiriti

<b>GOOD PRACTICE DESCRIPTION:</b>	La scuola di bollenti spiriti
Country	Italy
Title of the Practice	La scuola di bollenti spiriti
Year	Since 2011
Duration (the length of the practice)	320 hours, 40 days

Organization (name(s) of the organization(s) involved)	Region of Puglia, it is co-funded by the European Union through the P.O. F.S.E. 2007-2013
Reference (web sites etc)	<a href="http://bollentispiriti.regione.puglia.it">http://bollentispiriti.regione.puglia.it</a>

<b>GOOD PRACTICE APPLICATION:</b>	
Target Group	La Scuola di Bollenti Spiriti is open to Italian and foreign citizens, residing in Puglia, between the ages of 18 and 35.
Objectives of the Practice	<p>The School is an intensive learning path aimed at training youth policy players able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- contributing to the extension of the opportunities for participation in the new 2014-2015 "<i>Bollenti spiriti</i>" Plan to people and contexts with weak cultural, economic and relational capital;</li> <li>- promote generative actions in various fields of activity that enhance the contribution of young citizens to the common good and be an opportunity for experimentation, non-formal learning and discovery of unexpressed talents;</li> <li>- encourage the emergence and interconnection of energies and latent resources of the institutional, economic and social actors and young citizens of Puglia.</li> </ul>
Activity Description(short summary of the practice)	<p>"<i>La scuola di bollenti spiriti</i>" trains new professional figures dedicated to the activation of local development projects and community animation through the involvement of young people from Puglia.</p> <p>The main topics are: local development, development of youth policies, social entrepreneurship, urban</p>

	<p>regeneration and community animation. The topics are discussed in relation with the local context in which the school takes place.</p>
<p>Methodology/Approach Steps (e-learning, workshop, team meeting etc.)</p>	<p>The School uses experiential learning methods and practices able to increase the specific competencies of the participants and support their sense of initiative. The participants have the chance to develop their project management abilities, especially those regarding the social field. All the activities are strongly focused on the local level.</p> <p>The participants are involved in local, national and international realities working on the social field. The program includes a practical experience in local organizations that work with young people.</p>
<p><b>GOOD PRACTICE OUTCOMES:</b></p>	
	<p>The school supports the creation of a new professional figure: the one of the youth worker. The program enhances the contribution of young citizens to the community and helps them to develop soft skills and project management skills.</p> <p>At the end of the learning experience, the participants are able to design and develop youth policy projects, especially aimed to reduce the percentage of NEETs.</p>

## Master and Back

<p><b>GOOD PRACTICE</b></p>	<p><b>Master and Back</b></p>
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<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	
Country	Italy
Title of the Practice	Master and Back
Year	Since 2007
Duration (the length of the practice)	2007 – 2013. Duration may vary.
Organization (name(s) of the organization(s) involved)	Regione Autonoma della Sardegna, ESF (European Social Found).
Reference (web sites etc.)	<a href="https://www.regione.sardegna.it/masterandback/programma/">https://www.regione.sardegna.it/masterandback/programma/</a>

<b>GOOD PRACTICE APPLICATION:</b>	
Target Group	Young graduates, unemployed and employed, residing in Sardinia for at least 3 years or who have moved their residence, for study or work reasons no more than 10 years. The age limit for participation is 36 years, less than 41 years for return journeys.
Objectives of the Practice	The objective is twofold: on the one hand, to increase the level of education and training of young Sardinian graduates, fostering and supporting access to post-graduate high-level training courses at internationally recognized universities and quality organizations operating outside the Sardinia; on the other hand, fostering and supporting the return of young people in the regional territory and their integration into the world of work at the end of the training path, while

	<p>putting at the disposal of the Sardinian productive system the new skills acquired.</p>
<p>Activity Description (short summary of the practice)</p>	<p>Master and Back, is a program that allows young Sardinian graduates to specialize and / or work outside of Sardinia and, as a second part, to complete the training experience with the return in Sardinia and work placement in companies, research centres, universities and public institutions.</p> <p>The program funds the enrolment in Higher education programs (PHD, Postgraduate masters...) of top quality universities outside of Sardinia or the salary for work/internship in companies. The second line of the program co-funds Sardinian companies that hire participants that took part in the first line of funding.</p>
<p>Methodology/Approach Steps (e-learning, workshop, team meeting etc.)</p>	<p>Master and Back is an international mobility program. The activities may include internships, higher education programs like postgraduate courses, PHD, second level masters.</p> <p>The “back” part of the program regards work experiences in a local company, organization or any kind of private and public entity.</p>

<p><b>GOOD PRACTICE OUTCOMES:</b></p>	
	<p>According to the evaluation report of the program, made in 2015, the program had positive effects on the employability of the participants: it widened their horizons (89,7%), it contributed to their growth and sense of autonomy and responsibility (82,7%), it defined new professional goals (73,8%) and it strengthened social ties, both personal (72,9%) and</p>

professional (66,8%).

It gave better employment opportunities for participants: the young people who took part in the Master and Back program have not only found a job more easily than the Sardinian counterparts have, but they also have obtained other indirect benefits, the result of soft effects.

Furthermore, Master and Back created development opportunities for young Sardinians and it often improved their abilities, it gave them resources to reach in an easier way their objectives.

## Conclusion

The incentives of Italy provide an opportunity for a small portion of Italians during of after post secondary education, according to the location of their availability, to access the entrepreneurial education and gain competences related to entrepreneurship; all the competences defined by Entrecomp are not nurtured well enough in order for Italy to be considered a country for healthy development of the entrepreneurial mindset.

An incentive that works contrary to the development of an entrepreneurial mindset is a law in Italy that allows termination of an employee under justifiable reasons, which are detailed under Italian law. However, under the circumstances that an enterprise is going bankrupt, an employer would not have sufficient grounds to terminate an employee. Additionally, an employer is not able to terminate an employee under most underperformance-based tasks. This translates as a counter incentive for developing an entrepreneurial mindset because a person entering the workforce in Italy has a higher change of becoming financially independent trough joining an already established business.

According to the statistics of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, “only one in four adults perceive there to be good business opportunities (placing it at 53rd out of 60 countries)”, as well as having the second highest fear of failure of starting a business within the 60 countries analyzed by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor.

According the all the information gathered, the proposition to improve the development of the entrepreneurial mindset within Italy is to reshape the formal/mandatory form of education that will include, in its courses, the subjects of how to cooperate with others in order to achieve certain goals, as well as explore the goals that a person would like to achieve.

For additional specific information on the state of Entrepreneurial Education in Italy and its developments, please refer to the references page.

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