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Final Report

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Executive Summary

The European Commission has specifically linked the development of entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours to education and training. The development of a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship is one of the eight key competences recognised at EU level in the Key Competences Reference Framework.

This study is an attempt to get a first impression on the level and type of activities taken at practitioner level to include entrepreneurship in teacher education. It is a pilot study that might serve as a basis for the design of further research, but is by no means complete or exhaustive.

It was intended to get an overview of activities; in other words, modules, methods, projects and courses that train and prepare student teachers for entrepreneurship education. Those activities pursued by teacher education institutions may serve as inspiration for other institutions across Europe.

The study covers a selection of ten countries, eight EU Member States and two countries outside the EU, as follows: Austria, Belgium (Flanders only), Finland, Hungary, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, the UK (Scotland only), Croatia and Norway. In all countries studied, political willingness to implement entrepreneurship education in schools at primary and secondary level has been identified. Entrepreneurship education in schools and higher education institutions is promoted by national initiatives and strategies; curricula and schools (and hence teachers) are expected to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes in this area.

The study followed a three step methodology. After comprehensive web-site review of all teacher education institutions in a given country, interesting examples have been selected. For those examples, further information was collected through telephone interviews.

On the basis of the data collected through those steps of research, a high level of activities in initial teacher education was found in two countries (Finland and Norway). A medium level of activity was found in four countries, (Belgium-FI, Netherlands, Sweden and UK-Scotland); a low level of activities in initial teacher education has equally been found in four countries (Austria, Croatia, Hungary and Portugal). Twenty-one specific activities have been described in more detail.

Four main types of ongoing activities in initial teacher education have been identified: Compulsory modules implemented in initial teacher education, elective modules, extracurricular activities and horizontal institutional approaches.

However, entrepreneurship education still seems to be, across the countries, a quite uncommon topic in initial teacher education. Implementing modules and courses of entrepreneurship education in initial teacher education and introducing innovative methods of learning and working seems to be a task that can hardly be realised on a short term basis. Initiatives take time to get accepted at practitioners' level and achieve impacts on teachers and students.

Yet experience shows that, once it has been established, the concept and the innovative methods associated with entrepreneurship education gain popularity among teachers and students very quickly.