Creative Entrepreneurship in Schools:
Policy Recommendations from the CENTRES project
CENTRES – Creative Entrepreneurship in Schools
Policy Recommendations from the project

The CENTRES project is about generating fresh ideas and innovation among the future stars of Europe’s creative industries.¹

www.centres-eu.org

Introduction

The European Union, as one of the biggest exporters of creative goods, has long recognized the growth potential of the creative industries, particularly in relation to its innovation agenda: creative industries are acknowledged as “the most potentially innovative of all EU sectors” and as critical drivers and disseminators of innovation, as well as an important provider of employment and a major player in regional growth.²

Due to the decline in many traditional sectors, such as manufacturing, an increasing number of countries in Europe are now looking to strengthen their creative industries and the creative economy is becoming a priority policy area for many European governments.

However, there are a number of education-related challenges facing Creative and Cultural Industries (CCIs) as outlined below, which the CENTRES (Creative Entrepreneurship in Schools) project seeks to address.

A lack of entrepreneurial skills within Cultural and Creative Industries

Skills development is an issue of particular relevance to the CCIs. In the 2010 Green paper “Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries”³ it is stated that “at the crossroads of creativity and entrepreneurship, it remains difficult for companies in the CCIs, in particular SMEs, to find staff with the right mix of skills.” Also, a study published by the EC on 7 January 2011 on The Entrepreneurial Dimension of the Cultural and Creative Industries⁴ reveals that there is a general lack of entrepreneurial skills within all sectors of the CCIs, which is one of the main factors inhibiting market entry.

A lack of entrepreneurial educational programmes that fit the needs of the Cultural and Creative Industries sector

The EDCCI report also suggests that “integrating creativity and entrepreneurship within existing educational curricula is an important way to support CCI SMEs.” However, it is an issue that is not sufficiently being addressed at the moment. Finding ways to develop the key competences

¹ Quote from the CENTRES website.
² Creative Graduates, Creative Futures, Ball et al 2010.
³ Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries
⁴ The Entrepreneurial Dimension of the Cultural and Creative Industries
of young people, which foster initiative and entrepreneurship, is a key priority of the European Union and the Lifelong Learning Programme.

A call for stronger partnerships between education institutions and CCIs

Links to creative businesses have been identified in the EDCCI report as a specific way of unlocking entrepreneurship and innovation, which notes that “there should also be an increased effort to promote soft skills such as creative or intercultural skills through stronger partnerships between education institutions and CCIs.” Helping schools establish mutually beneficial partnerships with the world of work is seen by the EU as key way to enhance the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation and a priority of the EC’s Comenius sub-programme.

The need for a joint European approach

The British Council-led CENTRES project (2012–14) was developed in response to a perceived need to have a joint European approach to address the challenges outlined above and to influence policies. There is no other forum in Europe that addresses entrepreneurial education in relation to the creative industries. There is, however, a growing amount of innovation and good practice in this area in individual Member States as well as in the more general area of entrepreneurship and creativity.

The following policy recommendations have been co-created by partners involved in the delivery of the CENTRES. A range of new teaching methods have been tested in schools across Europe, in close cooperation with creative businesses, with the aim of improving and strengthening the creative and entrepreneurial skills of young people, exploring what works and what does not work, and shaping an agenda where creative entrepreneurialism is increasingly understood, made available and championed in schools and other educational settings across Europe. The project has created a European forum for issues relating to entrepreneurship education specific to the creative industries, and for sharing innovation and best practice in this area.

This ambitious multi-country project has been co-funded by the European Commission, the British Council and eight organisations across Europe in the Czech Republic (National Institute for Education), Denmark (The Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship – Young Enterprise), Estonia (ENTRUM), Lithuania (Lietuvos Junior Achievement), Finland (The Aalto University School of Business, The Small Business Center), Poland (The Polish Association of Creativity), Slovenia (CEED) and the UK (A New Direction).

The CENTRES project has two key aims:

• To promote models and a methodology that can be used by schools and other organisations providing entrepreneurial education to develop pupils’ creativity and entrepreneurial skills.
• To promote ways to engage creative entrepreneurs and businesses productively with schools, as well as to engage school-age students in practical business opportunities in the creative industries.

The CENTRES project was delivered at a critical time for Europe as some big decisions are made on the type of society we want to shape for our young people and the type of economy we want to build. As we emerge from the economic downturn and with youth unemployment at unprecedented levels, it is clearer than ever that the Creative Industries will play a central role in our future economic competitiveness – contributing to the type of balanced, agile, high-value and resilient economy we all aspire toward. It will also play a role in generating the range of content, stories and experiences which help to create a new Europe – one of pluralism, tolerance and distinctiveness. These two agendas – the economic and the cultural – converge through the new Creative Europe Programme, as well as through the approaches of those European governments that are already conversant with the value of creativity. However, there is a real danger that in many countries, the combined influence of financial austerity and educational traditionalism means that the value of creativity and of the hugely powerful dynamism generated when creativity and entrepreneurialism converge, is little understood and is being lost.

In other words, in too many parts of Europe creative entrepreneurship in schools is being squeezed to the margins; with schools finding it ever harder to deliver progressive learning tools. This is in part the consequence of a reduction in spending on activities such as creative learning and arts education, with the arts and cultural sector hard hit by the global economic downturn and corresponding public funding cuts. Yet at the same time, some countries (e.g. Sweden and Finland) see creative entrepreneurship as critical to the challenges of the age, with entrepreneurship education overall being increasingly promoted in some European countries and creative entrepreneurship in particular a major focus in northern Europe.

According to the report Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe – eight countries have launched specific strategies to promote entrepreneurship education, while 13 others include it as part of their national lifelong learning, youth or growth strategies. Half of European countries are engaged in a process of educational reform which includes the strengthening of entrepreneurship education. Yet in most countries, entrepreneurship, and particularly creative entrepreneurship, remain at the margins of the overall offer and are in danger of being lost altogether without a strategic and knowledge overview which promotes (creative) entrepreneurialism as key to personal development, achievement, attainment and improved life chances.

In this context, the CENTRES programme has played an important role in building knowledge of, and an appetite for creative entrepreneurship in schools. It has supported partners to increase and improve provision, to advocate for the significant value of the approach, and to ensure that it is integrated across the whole learning experience rather than limited to peripheral “nice to have” (as opposed to “must have”) exercises. This, of course, is a critical issue for Europe. There are two main factors which position creative entrepreneurship as so important for our economic and cultural futures:

– The nature of work is changing. We are seeing a structural shift toward a more agile, freelance and micro-business economy. Drivers such as digitalisation, a reduction in the size of the public sector, and a growth in service and knowledge-based industries mean that we need more and more people to have entrepreneurial skills. This is particularly vital with youth unemployment so high and there being little prospect of this being tackled through recruitment alone. Young people need to be encouraged to start up their own businesses. Creative

1 Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe – National Strategies, Curricula and Learning Outcomes (European Commission, March 2012).

2 Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Wales and the Flemish part of Belgium.

3 Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey.
entrepreneurship is particularly important, catering to the shifting demands of the growing creative industries sector, but also introducing the collaborative skills, interdisciplinary practice and digital literacy so key to success across a range of increasingly flexible industries.

– The nature of society is changing: We are increasingly globalised, intercultural and connected. This opens up opportunities for the development of new cultures and sensibilities and it changes our sense of identity and tradition. The ideas this generates will shape a future Europe and influence the profile of the economy. If we are to grow peacefully and inclusively, we need to open up opportunities for young people from all backgrounds and invest them with the skills and confidence to make the most of their cultural capital. Creative entrepreneurship is vital here in building the competencies for self-fulfilment and survival in an increasingly atomised and fast-changing world.

CENTRES has helped us to understand the role of creative entrepreneurship in schools and other educational settings, and it has shone a light on why this matters for our economy and society as a whole. The strategic opportunity now exists – building on the 2013 Creative Economy Report and European Commission Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan (Re-igniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe), and capitalising on the Creative Europe Programme – to generate an unprecedented commitment to creative entrepreneurship as central to the educational experiences and life opportunities of young people across Europe. Below we set out key policy issues and identify priority areas that require attention and constitute CENTRES policy recommendations:

- Horizontal and integrated approaches to creative entrepreneurship in schools
- An arts revival in our schools
- Toward a creative entrepreneurship curriculum for schools
- Pervasively digital creative learning
- Dedicated creative entrepreneurship programmes
- Enabling programmes for creative entrepreneurship teaching
- Coordinated programmes to link education and business

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8 In the UK alone, employment in the arts, heritage, digital and creative sectors is expected to rise by 32% in the next ten years. One in six jobs in London is currently in the creative sector. See: http://www.createjobslondon.org/content/506/Background
Policy Agenda

Creativity and innovation delivering a competitive, resilient and high value economy for Europe

The European economy is undergoing a rapid process of restructuring. The EU Creative Economy Report shows that the role of manufacturing decreased from 16.9% of GDP in 2000 to 9.7% in 2011. At the same time, the copyright share of GDP increased from 3.9% to 4.8% and copyright share of Manufacturing and Services from 5.4% to 8.4%.

The Creative Industries are one of the few economic success stories of the last decade. The EU’s 2020 Strategy states that “the cultural and creative industries are important drivers of economic and social innovation in other sectors.” The annual European Competitiveness Report highlights that “creative industries are increasingly a source of growth in the EU,” accounting for “3.3% of total EU GDP and 3% of employment.” The report underlines that “creative industries stand out because of their propensity for innovation” and that “they are not only innovators themselves but have also been an important driver for innovation (as) they account for increasing inputs in the development of other sectors.”

Official statistics published in January 2014 by UK government reveal that the UK’s Creative Industries are now worth £71.4 billion per year to the UK economy – generating just over a staggering £8 million pounds an hour. Growth of almost 10% in 2012, outperforming all other sectors of UK industry. Accounted for 1.68 million jobs in 2012, 5.6 per cent of UK jobs.³


Policy Recommendation

The implications of this “creative age” need to be recognised horizontally, operating across different policies (i.e. education and culture, employment and economy as well as innovation). For example, we need computer programmers to engage creative entrepreneurial skills if we are to grow the software and games sector to its potential. We also need to build the competencies which allow creative and management skills to converge. Most of all, we need an approach that positions creativity and creative entrepreneurship as delivering value across the education landscape – improving attainment and achievement, equipping young people with life skills and business skills, and engendering positive outcomes such as collaborative values, risk-taking and self-initiative.

Project Activity

CENTRES has championed approaches that integrate creative entrepreneurship activities within the learning landscape. For example, CEED in Slovenia developed and tested a programme for creative entrepreneurship called “Training for the Brave” in three high schools with 69 students. The programme didn’t seek to teach entrepreneurship in an abstract and theoretical way, but rather nurtured an environment to foster the development of an entrepreneurial mindset, creative thinking and aspirations, while developing entrepreneurial skills. The programme commenced with initial pitches from young people and then went through a process of bespoke teaching and mentoring methods, networking and awareness-raising of creative entrepreneurship as a key priority in a progressive education sector. A major networking event, “The Brave, Creative and Entrepreneurial” was attended by over 200 head teachers, teachers, entrepreneurs, students, and government officials. It was the first event in Slovenia that brought together such diverse stakeholders to address the issue of encouraging creativity and entrepreneurial thinking in schools. The event was supported by the Prime Minister of Slovenia, Alenka Bratušek, who in her opening address said: “We all recognise that as a society we have a lot of great ideas that we do not realise, as we often lack the entrepreneurial approach, self-confidence, persistence, and proactivity necessary to put them into action. We need open minded, self-confident, motivated individuals who won’t stop when faced with problems, but will be always seeking solutions.”
The lack of arts and creative teaching in schools and other educational settings, plus the reduction in the offer (due to austerity and shifting education policy toward STEM subjects) Across Europe, our educational system stresses the need for skills in STEM subjects rather than “STEAM” (where the inserted “A” stands for “Arts”). Many STEM learning activities and processes do have a strong creative element (e.g. problem-solving in maths or design and development in technology and engineering). However, teaching practice does tend to be more didactic and attainment focused, with the space for collaborative practice, imagination and the arts less emphasised. In this context, the value of the arts needs to be made much clearer – in building a range of skills and competencies, lifting confidence, encouraging problem-solving and boundary-crossing practice, and in increasing attainment and achievement in other subjects.

Policy Recommendation

Arts subjects and art-based skills and methods need to be increased and incorporated to teaching across the curricula. We also need to build the confidence and competency of teaching professionals to integrate arts based approaches, and we need to improve the offer provided by the arts and cultural sector to ensure it better fits the needs of the education sector.

Project Activity

CENTRES has provided a platform for arts teaching, enabling educational and arts professionals to develop tools which embed the arts as a vital and integrated part of the learning experience. For example, in Denmark, the ArtRun project involved a partnership between a school and museum of contemporary art to co-create an arts education project that fitted the needs of both organisations, and engaged 39 pupils in a set of high profile activities. In the UK, each of the pilot projects involved arts-based activities to the core of an overall approach in creative entrepreneurship – e.g. the development of a CD, a glass-making business and a music event. An arts-led approach provided the content and ideas for development into creative business activities.
Policy Agenda

The lack of multi-disciplinary approaches / a strong emphasis on specific disciplines

The EU report Guide to Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS 3) states that multi-disciplinarity and the identification and invocation of different kinds of skills and knowledge will play a central role in Europe’s economy.

Creative competencies and art-based skills and methods need to be incorporated into education and curricula development horizontally and in multi-disciplinary settings.

Skills pertinent to multi-disciplinary working (such as interpersonal skills) need to be identified as well as discussing values and ethics and exploring other cultures.

Policy Recommendation

In accordance with the policy recommendations in the Guide to Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (p.32), we need:

“Policies to ensure a proper supply and mix of skills; existence and coverage of training on entrepreneurship and creative problem-solving; autonomy and transparency of education and research organisations; existence of policies to support the regular and long-term collaboration of education and research organisations with businesses; explicit consideration of the role of Key Enabling Technologies (KETs).”

We argue that there is a need for a range of specific policy instruments with an emphasis on creative entrepreneurship – focusing on long-term programmes (rather than simple projects) that build links between the creative industries and schools (e.g. via work related learning, apprenticeships and the co-design of curricula); and which leverage creativity to generate a stronger skills base in communication, collaboration, management and the translation of ideas and content into business. There is also a need for accreditation in creative entrepreneurship as part of a creative entrepreneurship curriculum.

Project Activity

The CENTRES project in London (led by A New Direction) involved pilots in five London schools accredited through the Social Enterprise Qualification (SEQ) for young people. The SEQ is a recognised international accreditation developed by the Real Ideas Organisation. Young people undertaking the SEQ are accredited for learning about social enterprise and for setting up and running their own social enterprise, giving them real experience of being an entrepreneur and putting their learning into practice. In the context of the CENTRES pilot activity, this was centred on creative entrepreneurship, including the opportunity to meet and learn from successful creative entrepreneurs. The rationale for undertaking an accredited approach was to enable schools to position creative entrepreneurship as a cross-cutting activity which complements and adds value across the curriculum. It also enabled schools to accredit learning and give the project increased value in the eyes of the schools and of the participating students, left a legacy for continuing work within each school to extend its reach, gave students real life experience of being a creative entrepreneur in a “safe” context (most students would not normally be allowed to start their own business in school); and gave students (and teachers) the opportunity to meet “real life” creative entrepreneurs and learn from them.
Pervasively digital creative learning

Policy Agenda

Digitalisation and new/emergent technologies offer much untapped potential for realising creative ideas, developing new competencies and generating future enterprises.

We are still in the early stages of pervasive digitally-enabled technology. The new platforms and channels, tools and devices, offer enormous potential for embedding creative learning across the educational landscape. This will be a real catalyst for the future economy. However, we need to ensure that we support our young people to create and make using their touch (haptic skills) and imagination. Digital should not replace our ability to enquire, experiment and problem-solve.

Policy Recommendation

Digitally-enabled creative entrepreneurship programmes that combine the application and interpretation of digital technology and encourage young people to explore the boundaries of technology to go beyond being mere “users.” This should be informed by genuine industry partnership – with creative technology firms working closely with schools to develop bespoke solutions that enhance creative learning and build competency and skills in relevant areas.

Project Activity

All of the CENTRES projects have involved a strong digital element. For example, in Poland, the Polish Association of Creativity led a pilot project which focused on increasing “innovation competence” and entrepreneurship among students; connecting students with the creative industries sector by brokering links to business; and supporting the translation of ideas into practice. Digital tools were used across projects in fashion, film and media, with a strong use of social media to build networks and communicate the offer; plus the introduction of digital tools in training activities as vital for market development, research, sales and communication.
Policy Agenda

The youth unemployment crisis in Europe
At more than 22%, youth unemployment in Europe is at record levels. In Southern and Eastern Europe, the youth unemployment rate is almost double that level. We need to equip our young people with the skills, confidence and know-how to develop their own employment opportunities as well as to be well-suited to employment generated by others.

There are some successful models here. For example, in the UK, the organisation Creative and Cultural Skills has made good early progress on a campaign called Building a Creative Nation\(^{10}\) – with the task to create 6,500 creative jobs for young people in 1,000 days.

There are also more generic and Europe-wide approaches with a proven impact. For example, the European Commission’s Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan shows that 15–20% of students who participate in a mini-company programme in secondary school will later start their own company. This figure that is about three to five times that for the general population.

Whether or not they go on to found businesses or social enterprises, young people who benefit from entrepreneurial learning, develop business knowledge and essential skills and attitudes including creativity, initiative, tenacity, teamwork, understanding of risk and a sense of responsibility. This is the entrepreneurial mind-set that helps entrepreneurs transform ideas into action and also significantly increases employability.

Policy Recommendation

Formal and informal entrepreneurial education should become an important and compulsory part of every member state’s educational system. Every secondary school student should participate in at least one informal entrepreneurship educational programme (e.g. a mini-company programme, such as ENTRUM’s start-up programme, Aflatun). Dedicated creative entrepreneurship facilities such as incubators, talent development projects, R&D with industry partners should be set up in educational settings. Creative Enterprise curricula offering structured learning and accreditation would also help to raise the life chances of young people across Europe.

Project Activity

CENTRES has enabled partners to explore a range of targeted mechanisms for increasing the creative entrepreneurship capacity and confidence of young people. For example, in Lithuania, a creative entrepreneurship summer camp was held for young people – bringing participants face-to-face with investors and entrepreneurs, exposing them to experience and expertise, and providing a supportive environment for business ideas to be tested. In Denmark, the Creative Wave project involved an innovation competition for young people, helping them to shape their creative thinking toward commercially viable ideas and building relationships with creative businesses in ways that are relevant to the curriculum but also relevant to the creative sector.

\(^{10}\) http://ccskills.org.uk/supporters
Policy Agenda

Confidence and competence in creative and entrepreneurial teaching methods, plus significant pressure on the time and resources of teaching professionals

Entrepreneurship is first of all a mind set and is underpinned by values that are supported by practical skills and networks. The number of the teachers in European schools who have got at least the basics of entrepreneurship education and have their own entrepreneurial experience is very low. In addition, links to creative businesses both large and small are underdeveloped.

Policy Recommendation

The European Commission Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan sets out an agenda where entrepreneurial education and creative methods should became a compulsory part of training and development for as many teachers as possible. In addition, programmes that enable links to be brokered between schools and businesses (e.g. creative apprenticeship programmes; or the co-design of creative entrepreneurship teaching with businesses and teachers collaborating) should be scaled up. This will enable teachers to work in partnership with industry as a way of building confidence and improving understanding of industry needs, and of bringing industry into direct contact with young people.

Project Activity

In Estonia, the Entrum Foundation introduced a four step methodology, working with young people, teaching professionals and leading creative businesses to engender enterprising approaches to the creative industries and encourage start-ups; and to generate readiness for professional skills in the creative industries (e.g. production, post-production, marketing). This also helped to raise awareness of the types of teaching methods and materials required for this and the types of pathways these generate for young people. This included nurturing an enterprising mind set, building self-confidence; and integrating young people into a creative industries network of business incubators and creative entrepreneurs. Over 300 young people participated alongside three creative incubators, 61 creative businesses, 23 youth centres and 48 schools.

Coordinated programmes to link education and business

Policy Agenda

The lack of complementarity between educational and entrepreneurship development systems

The last decade has seen a plethora of initiatives to support creative entrepreneurs – e.g. specialist business support, incubators, investment and skills projects. At the same time, we have seen the emergence of a creative entrepreneurship agenda in schools and other educational settings. However, there is a lack of connection between services for businesses and services for young people and therefore a lack of continuity and progression routes.

Policy Recommendation

The education sector should be more effective in developing a structured continuum of opportunities which lead to greater opportunity in the workforce. This will require greater industry partnership, a blurring of educational and enterprise activities, and a balance between technical training and equipping young people with holistic skills in communication, collaboration and problem-solving. In Europe, we need to see more of and an improved quality across the following:

1. Creative business-incubators to provide to schools and non-formal education programmes additional assistance and coaching for young people and introduce to them work and services of business-incubators.
2. Creative mentors’ networks to work across schools and in business incubators – providing a consistency of advice and guidance and brokering links between creative businesses and schools.
3. Creative entrepreneurship development hubs to deliver out of school activities (e.g. mini-company programmes, start-up programmes, work-related learning, weekend schools etc.)
4. Brokered creative investment and potential fiscal incentives for creative firms as a CSR and talent recruitment strategy. This is to broker structured engagement for firms in schools, targeting creative entrepreneurship activities and readying young people for future employment.

Project Activity

CENTRES has demonstrated good practice in each of these areas. For example, in the Czech Republic, the National Institute for Education piloted an e-learning programme aimed to introduce creative entrepreneurship education with an emphasis on career guidance. 10 career counsellors and 195 pupils from the Central Bohemian region participated in the programme. This had three modules: a) Introduction to creativity and entrepreneurship education; b) Career guidance in schools as a creative process; c) The ‘Practice firm’ – creative vocational role-playing activities. In addition, in Estonia, the ENTRUM project delivered a coordinated set of support measures for young people to enable collaboration with creative businesses and engage incubators.
What Next?

Partners of the CENTRES programme will be actively building on their existing projects and identifying opportunities for a more structured, coordinated and embedded approach to creative entrepreneurship across Europe. We will be advocating for our recommendations to be explored and seriously considered and will be working with governments, agencies and organisations to promote best practice in creative entrepreneurship and build capacity and confidence in our education and creative sectors.

Before the project end in September 2014, in each partner country there will be a number of meetings and policy workshops held with national stakeholders to advocate CENTRES policy recommendations further. We will also be seeking opportunities to expand the network via potential European funding programmes.
CENTRES
Skills for the Future

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