
European Entrepreneurship Educators Program – 3EP

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Sažetak - potreba za obrazovanjem za poduzetništvo na Sveučilištu Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku razvila se iz dvije važne spoznaje: prvo, da se obrazovanje za jačanje poduzetničkog kapaciteta ljudi razvija ubrzano u SAD krajem 20. stoljeća i drugo, da se problem zaostajanja istočne Hrvatske ne može riješiti bez kapaciteta poduzetničkog djelovanja. Ovaj sraz globalne tendencije i lokalnih potreba doveo je do toga da je još krajem 1980ih na Ekonomskom fakultetu u Osijeku pokrenut smjer poduzetništva na preddiplomskoj razini studija, kao jedini takav program u tadašnjoj Jugoslaviji. Pravi zamah u razvoju obrazovanja za poduzetništvo dogodio se 2000. godine pokretanjem magistarskog znanstvenog studija iz poduzetništva, koji je zaslužan za stvaranje kritične mase istraživača poduzetništva ali i predavača posebno educiranih za sudjelovanje u obrazovanju za poduzetništvo. Kroz intenziviranu međunarodnu suradnju pokrenut je 2010. godine doktorski studij INOVATIVNOST I PODUZETNIŠTVO, čime je Sveučilište J.J. Strossmayera u Osijeku postala jedina visokoškolska institucija u Hrvatskoj sa cijelom vertikalom sveučilišnog obrazovanja za poduzetništvo, od preddiplomske, diplomske, specijalističke do doktorske razine. S tim referencama osječki tim istraživača i edukatora poduzetništva sudjeluje i u European Entrepreneurship Educators Program – 3EP, zajedno s University of Turku (Finska), Aarhus School of Business (Danska) i National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (UK).

Key words - Entrepreneurship education, educators program

Introduction

The need for education for entrepreneurship at the J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek emerged from two almost parallel important insights: mushrooming of educational programs in the field of entrepreneurship in the U.S.A. in late 1980ies and 1990ies, and that obvious development setback of Croatia, especially eastern Croatia, cannot be solved without individual and institutional capacity for entrepreneurial behaviour. This slash of global tendency and local needs opened the door for introducing the educational program in entrepreneurship at the Faculty of Economics in Osijek as early as 1989, what was the very first such program in former Yugoslavia.

Real start in developing educational programs in entrepreneurship happened when the Master's degree program in entrepreneurship, started in year 2000, because it was a source for developing a critical mass of researchers in entrepreneurship, what resulted in first doctoral thesis focused on entrepreneurship (from entrepreneurial university, learning organizations to social entrepreneurship) as well as lecturers specifically trained in applying pedagogies relevant for teaching/learning entrepreneurship.

Bologna reform requested a re-design of undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate educational programs, what was done in 2005. Through an intensive, years long, TEMPUS funded, international collaboration³⁹ the doctoral program INNOVATIVENESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP was established in 2010 what made J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek the only higher education institution in Croatia with the whole vertical of university education for entrepreneurship, from undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate programs including doctoral program. Close collaboration with Osijek's Centre for Entrepreneurship from its establishment, as well as with Business Incubator (BIOS) in Osijek and Policy

³⁹ Doctoral program INNOVATIVENESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP is a joint program of J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek, University of Turku, University of Klagenfurt, University of Maribor and Durham University, based on signed agreement among those higher education institutions providing mobility of doctoral students. In developing the program, essential contribution was provided by Allan Gibb (UK) and Jouko Havunen (Finland).

Centre for Entrepreneurship and Small Business (CEPOR) in Zagreb contributed to very good connectedness with small and medium sized businesses as well as with *policy* activities in the field of entrepreneurship, regional development, small and medium sized businesses and innovations.

With such references, Osijek's team of researchers and educators participate in the on-going European Entrepreneurship Educators Program – 3EP, jointly with the University of Turku (Finland), Aarhus School of Business (Denmark) and National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (UK).

3EP project started in 2010 as a three years project with 4 partners. In this paper, the experience of the J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek with the 3EP will be described, as well as the structure of this on-going project.

Rationale for starting European Entrepreneurship Educators Program – 3EP

The need for providing support for entrepreneurship in secondary and tertiary education institutions in Europe is well established in last decade and the debate has moved onto the nature and quality of the support provided. The European Commission has addressed the issues through series of discussions, expert groups and surveys, and the arguments in favour of increasing and improving the support for nascent entrepreneurs are reflected in policies and initiatives.

The European Entrepreneurship Educators Program – 3EP contributes to three EU collaborative processes: the Lisbon Agenda (in terms of increasing entrepreneurship and developing entrepreneurial competences of individuals), the Oslo Agenda (in terms of fostering entrepreneurial mindsets in students and educators) and Bologna Process (in terms of making European higher education services more compatible and comparable).

While the rationale for taking action is established, it is less clear how action should be effectively undertaken to achieve the best results. The *2008 Survey of Entrepreneurship Education in Higher Education in Europe* carried out on behalf of the European Commission found that less than a quarter of students are involved in any form of entrepreneurship education and that there is a considerable difference in quantity and quality of provision of entrepreneurship education in

Europe. The study highlights a number of issues relating to institutions structures that affect whether entrepreneurship education is given priority, that change must occur at the institutional level to have a lasting impact. These findings are supported by academic research as well – as Braun et al (2006, p. 9) stated that next two conditions are both necessary and sufficient to make universities production places of entrepreneurial competences:

- “the members of universities – students, lecturers and staff need to develop entrepreneurial competences and
- The university itself has to become an entrepreneurial organization to enable the development of these competences”.

The report of the EC’s Expert Group (2008) identified many of the same issues and focused on the requirements to improve the capacity and capability of educators. Failings relating to the content of the curricula and the pedagogies employed were also highlighted. The inadequate resources allocated to entrepreneurship education and the constraints educators face in developing effective courses cannot be addressed through individual development alone but requires changes in policy and implementation at national and institutional levels.

Overall goal and objectives of the 3EP

Sharing understanding about the rationale behind the project, the overall goal of 3EP was identified as to “increase the number of participants to entrepreneurship education in schools and universities”; “improving the image of entrepreneurs in society and the attractiveness of entrepreneurship as a career choice” as well as “fostering creativity and innovation in education and training”.

In order to achieve this overall goal the project is led by following objectives:

- Create a pedagogically driven programme for summer academies that addresses key needs in curriculum change
- Create institutional change through curriculum change / institutional audit
- Create 3EP graduates (Fellows) motivated to undertake ‘action for change’ (commitments)
- Support 3EP Fellows to deliver change at all levels, supported by transnational mentors

- Create a legacy of online materials; European network of 3EP Fellows; transnational European pool of mentors; and a sustainable model of summer academy delivery which can be operated across Europe at regional, national or trans-national levels.

Activities, actors, timeline and expected outcomes of the 3EP

3EP is designed around a long-term vision of running an Europe wide programme which invigorates the promotion and teaching of entrepreneurship in higher education, and the creation of entrepreneurial organizations, sustained through potential future regional Academies. The experience of the National Council of Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE) has demonstrated that education institutions perform better in relation to entrepreneurship when curriculum change supports the development of the ‘entrepreneurial university’ thus embedding support for entrepreneurship in all departments of the institution (*entrepreneurship across the campus*), and creating institutional change (Towards the Entrepreneurial University, NCGE).

Activities

Long-term vision of the project is planned to be achieved through inter-related activities in order to develop 3EP Fellows that are motivated and supported to create change at personal, professional, institutional and national levels:

- Develop and implement pilot and subsequent summer academies
- Develop and implement the on-line network (inc. social networking function)
- Create materials & on-line pedagogies and support tools
- Develop proven academy model and support for network
- Evaluate and share learning from the project (network and academies) through the final “think tank”

Summer Academies

Three transnational entrepreneurship summer academies will be held during the project period, in duration of one week. The first one was held in Turku, Finland

in August 2010 (host: University of Turku), second one will be held in Aarhus, Denmark in August 2011 (host: Aarhus School of Business) and the third one will be held in Osijek, Croatia in August 2012 (host: J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek). Structure of the program can be seen on www.3ep.eu .

All three academies are focused on following key themes:

- Entrepreneurial educational challenges: role as educator and institutional catalyst
- Teaching the entrepreneurship mindset
- Teaching entrepreneurial behaviours, attitudes and skills
- Opportunity recognition and new venture development
- Developing entrepreneurship education strategies

Each partner provides input for the program – Osijek’s team provides input to Teaching entrepreneurial behaviours, attitudes and skills, using drama as a learning tool. Besides this, Osijek’s team contributes in topics as effectuation and communities of practice, as well as on entrepreneurial university concept.

During this one week of intensive work, special emphasis is on style of learning, as a part of overall education for entrepreneurship. The style of learning is very inclusive and interactive, based on *Learning by Doing* concept. The basic idea is to implement at least 40 different pedagogies which participants would be able to use with their own students. Most of the work is undertaken in small groups, allowing exchange of different teaching experiences, and building the pool of teaching practices, methods and styles as an open source for entrepreneurship educators.

It is expected that participants’ “take away” will be enriched experience as well as access to open source of pedagogies, contents and practices needed to make changes in their personal approach and teaching methods. Very important aspect of expected “take away” is ability to contextualize newly acquired knowledge and skills in the conditions of their respective institutions.

On-line network

Participants in the academies will achieve 3EP Fellowship status, which entails both obligations and rights, and they will become the vanguard of a network that will eventually reach into every region of the EU. In the first academy held in Turku, Finland in 2010 there were 53 participants, from 7 countries, and 25 of them fulfilled requirements to get the status of 3EP Fellowships. There is already a pool of transnational mentors of 50 educators from UK (mostly), Denmark, Finland and Croatia. The transnational mentors are selected based on rigorous recruitment criteria to ensure they have the knowledge and competencies to help Fellows create change within their own institutions.

Creation of support tools

3EP is producing two sets of resources for the programme – learning materials required for the delivery of the summer academies and the online tools to support the network of 3EP Fellows but also to be used as an open source for educators in the field of entrepreneurship. J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek is in charge for developing 3EP distance learning portal, using experience from developing, jointly with Microsoft and e-Vision, distance learning portal for its doctoral program INNOVATIVENESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP. 3EP distance learning portal will provide communication in the network of fellows as well as communication between mentors and mentees, and it links to <http://user.3ep.eu> .

Academy model and ongoing support

The final output from the academies will be a ‘franchise’ model for running a transnational or national entrepreneurship academy. The model will include all aspects, from governance to finance and from curriculum content to pedagogies, including all the learning materials necessary to run an academy.

After first academy delivered in Turku, Finland in 2010, some intervention were made in the design of the academy which will be delivered in Aarhus in August 2011. After third academy which will be run in Croatia in 2012, the final model will be designed and be available online with all needed support materials.

Evaluation and sharing learning / dissemination (network and academies) through

final “think tank”

Following the final summer academy in Croatia in August 2012, the Strategic Panel will invite representatives of all stakeholders (Alumni – Fellows, Mentors, Higher education institutions, Students, European Commission) in the project to consider the main learning points from the project and what recommendations should be made to national and EU policy makers with regard education for entrepreneurship. The event will take a ‘Think Tank’ approach to identifying the key issues for dissemination.

Actors

3EP is a joint effort of four European partners who share their wealth of expertise and experience to deliver all 3EP activities. The project is led by the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE), UK – Paul Hannon, and supervised by the European wide Strategic Panel.

National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE) was established in 2004, as a key driver for change in UK universities, by shaping the institutional environment for enterprise and entrepreneurship and embedding good practices, increasing the number of graduate businesses and informing regional and national policies that affect enterprise. NCGE has an important impact on policy aspect of developing entrepreneurial university concept not only in UK but internationally, too.

Aarhus Entrepreneurship Centre at the Aarhus University, Denmark represents a network of teachers from different departments of the Aarhus University, primarily teachers from the humanities, the social science, the faculty of science and the Aarhus School of Business, as well as from the health science and from the faculty of theology. The network is active in developing new entrepreneurial teaching methods and contents.

Turku School of Economics, as a part of University of Turku, Finland has a worldwide reputation for its work in the field of entrepreneurship, technology,

innovations support and SME education, with emphasis on industrial relations and foresight. It hosts the secretariat of the European Council for Small Business (ECSB) – the Europe’s leading association for small business and entrepreneurship educators and researchers.

International Centre for Entrepreneurial Studies at the J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek, Croatia was established as a part of TEMPUS funded project in 2010. It is a virtual hub of all activities related to research of entrepreneurship and education for developing entrepreneurship competences from undergraduate to postgraduate level. Joint doctoral program in INNOVATIVENESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP, started in 2010 is based on agreement among TEMPUS partners (J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek, University of Turku, University of Klagenfurt, University of Maribor and Durham University) which enables high mobility of doctoral students and faculty involved in the program.

Timeline

3EP project started in 2010 and will run till 2012, with three summer academies run in each year and on-going activities of mentoring potential fellows.

Expected outcomes

3EP project will reach a minimum of 150 educators across Europe – the first academy held in Turku, Finland already provided one third of this quota. The pool of transnational mentors is filling already (50) as well as 3EP Fellows. A sustainable ‘franchise’ model of academy will be provided online with all support materials for post 3EP funding. A policy recommendations based on inputs – lessons learned by all stakeholders in the project will be presented in the final event which is planned to for the end of the project.

Conclusion

Experience of the J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek with 3EP project is manifold:

- There is a confirmation of the Porter's competitiveness model - it is very important to be 'trained' on the domestic market before exiting to the international arena. Being active for 20 years in research and education activities in the field of entrepreneurship, brought to Osijek's team knowledge and skills needed to participate as a relevant player on international scene.
- Without research activities it is not possible to work on development of educational content, pedagogies, educators and business model for delivering educational programs.
- Commitments on individual level, collaboration capacity and availability of open sources of knowledge are essential for acting as change agents in order to develop entrepreneurial culture of institutions (like entrepreneurial university, entrepreneurial business, entrepreneurial local government).

Being in the middle of the project timeline, and based on already achieved objectives it is reasonable to assume that the project will create a proven model of educating educators in the field of entrepreneurship for future international and/or localised delivery across Europe.

Literature

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