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PRACTICES IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE AND RUSSIA

Abstract: *The REBUS project emerged in countries where the younger generations are reluctant to engage in private business and entrepreneurship, preferring "safe" employment at the public (state owned) enterprises. Their awareness of own entrepreneurship potentials is very low, while the capacity of talented and skilled students often stays unutilized once being employed. Thus the REBUS project supports embedding entrepreneurship to the South East Europe and Russian universities, at the same time creating network for cooperation between EU and partner countries.*

One of the first activities was identification, analysis and description of common practices in entrepreneurship education. For this purpose, a comprehensive desk research was combined with expert interviews to inquire about approaches of learning and teaching, connections to lessons, courses and extracurricular activities and approaches to validate entrepreneurial competences. The stocktaking related to the knowledge and differentiation on entrepreneurial competences, leading questions of the surveys related to gaps between formalised (HE) and informal (personal oriented, e.g. in internships) learning and assessment, potentials for enhancements of acquisition of those competences, validation of entrepreneurial competences and selection of key sub-competences.

This paper presents results of research and needs analysis (stocktaking) and project objectives and first results.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, Education, Competences, Validation*

1. Introduction

Even entrepreneurship has its roots in the 19th century when entrepreneur was considered as a risk-taking person mainly related to manufacturing, a greater emphasis on entrepreneurship, in scientific context, is set in the late 20th and early 21th century. More appropriate definition for 21st century is that entrepreneur is a creative personality who takes the initiative, and also an initiator of innovation (McConnell & Brue, 2005).

Entrepreneurship has become one of the most popular concepts in the business field, especially after global economic crisis in 2008. Level of entrepreneurial sector development has critical impact on success of national economies and its growth (Acs &

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Szerb, 2009; Bosma & Levie, 2010; Korez-Vide & Tominc, 2016), and education can play a vital role in the economic growth (Muhib & Ali Khan, 2010). Some authors, like Muhib and Ali Khan (2010), have been established strong correlation between entrepreneurship in education and economic growth. They used increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and decrease in unemployment rate, as indicators of economic growth.

Dynamic and innovative economy, able to create new jobs, requires greater number of young people who are willing to become entrepreneurs and are willing to accept challenges in the process of creation and successful development of their own businesses. As a result of increasing need for young people with initiative and entrepreneurial mindset, many studies in the field of higher education have been carried out with main aim of development of competencies related to entrepreneurship (EACEA). Development and adoption of these competencies is of crucial importance for EU neighbouring countries in their process of convergence and alignment with EU economic and social standards. However, Western Balkan and Russian employers are in desperate need for graduates with these competences, especially from engineering studies. This is due to former state political system in these countries where any initiative toward development of entrepreneurship and private sector has been suppressed and discouraged, while state regulated economy was promoted and encouraged. The REBUS project is aimed at promotion of entrepreneurship competences of graduates of engineering studies from the Western Balkan countries and Russia, through development, test, validation and mainstreaming of holistic and needs driven open learning modules. The REBUS project can be conceived as the interface between higher education and practical business context. EU partners will help in addressing issues and challenges expected in introduction and embedment of entrepreneurship curricula into Higher Education Institutions. Also, EU partners will support establishment of cooperation network between EU, Western Balkan and Russian partners.

Specific objectives of the REBUS project can be summarized into development of various entrepreneurship training modules and their integration into existing or new curricula, creation and adoption of entrepreneurship competence validation system, implementation and evaluation of the training modules and competence validation system, promotion of entrepreneurship among staff and students at Higher Education Institutions (http://rebusproject.net/index.php/project/26-rebus-aims-and-objectives).

2. Literature review

In most of the studies undertaken so far on entrepreneurship education, education is divided into two forms: formal education (including education in schools and institutions of higher education) and informal education (here are all other forms of entrepreneurship education outside educational institutions in the form of different types of trainings, events, competitions etc.).

2.1. Formal entrepreneurial education in the countries of Eastern Europe

Different scholars have focused on the issues of entrepreneurship education in the framework of training or support of state (Dana, 2005).

Some research in the field of entrepreneurship education has compared entrepreneurial education in Anglo-Saxon and European countries, concluding that only one-third of Higher Education Institutions in Anglo-Saxon countries had one or more subjects of entrepreneurship in their curricula. In European tradition, entrepreneurship teaching has been included in research agendas since the late 1990s. Referring to Twaalfhoven and Wilson (2005), there is a large difference

between entrepreneurial education in the Anglo-Saxon and European university traditions.

Entrepreneurship education depends mostly on accepting entrepreneurial spirit from universities and creating an entrepreneurial environment in and around the university. The concept of the entrepreneurial university has led theorists to discuss the term "entrepreneurial university" and the relationship among university, industry and government (Martin & Etzkowitz, 2000).

The entrepreneurial university combines teaching, research, and contribution to the economy in the local community where it operates. This implies institutionalization and entrepreneurship teaching in university structures by creating entrepreneurial departments within university structures as well as centers or research institutes for research and development of entrepreneurial processes and in the transfer of knowledge between university and industry.

Twalholdfen et al. (2001) determined that there are three main models of entrepreneurship teaching in Central and Eastern Europe:

- A research oriented model that is based on creating new ideas for entrepreneurial practices and the development of pedagogical tools.
- A consultancy-oriented model that is inspired by establishing links with the local business community. Universities, research groups and very often students offer consulting services by providing practical courses such as writing a business plan.
- A model oriented to practical teaching by encouraging students to take part in business practice competitions and create personal networks with active people in business sector in order to establish a start-up.

There is a difficulty in identifying entrepreneurship courses, curricula and core units of universities that are dedicated to entrepreneurship, which are also highlighted by the cultural and linguistic barriers inherited from the communist system. Language terms that refer to entrepreneurial activity or even business have had a negative connotation during the communist period and often their use has been punished by law. In many cases, the term entrepreneurship was confused with the term business even in the academic use.

From an analysis of Varblane and Mets (2010) it was proven that in only 332 higher education institutions from 774 analyzed in Central and Eastern Europe there were subjects of entrepreneurship and in only 42% of higher education institutions there was at least one course on entrepreneurship. In 12% of schools there was a business curriculum, of which 65 curricula were bachelor and 50 in the master level. In only 2.5% of higher education institutions in Central and Eastern Europe it was possible to pursue a doctoral program with specialization in entrepreneurship.

Countries where entrepreneurial education was more active were Croatia and Slovenia. In the Baltic countries, dominates Latvia. While in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, only one-third of higher education institutions had specific courses for entrepreneurship. In Hungary and Poland entrepreneurship coverage was about 40%. In SEE countries, including Albania, entrepreneurship coverage was better than in Bulgaria and Serbia. As far as the former Soviet republics are concerned, especially in Russia, there is a selective approach to entrepreneurship teaching from 1,142 higher education institutions, only 38 have a curriculum on entrepreneurship.

2.2. Informal education of entrepreneurship in Central and Eastern Europe

Regarding start-up assistance to help develop their business, an initiative that should be mentioned is Youth Business International that has been present in different countries of

Southeast Europe. This initiative mobilizes the international business community to help young people who find it difficult to find support in another country to become entrepreneurs. Young Business International has worked mainly with young people in need by giving them a financial support as well as mentors for orienting young entrepreneurs. The first country that has worked with Young Business International's initiative is Hungary in 1993. Pilot programs have been in Poland and Albania. Croatia and Slovenia have implemented programs and projects related to this initiative.

The European Training Fundation (ETF) is a European Commission agency established in 1990 to contribute to the development of education and training in EU partner countries. The ETF assists partner countries in improving the quality of education and training with the main goal of economic growth and social inclusion. The ETF has had several projects in South-Est European countries such as Albania, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Croatia. The main focus of these projects was how the national education systems support and facilitate the development of key competencies and how different segments of the national education systems support entrepreneurial education. In Croatia, studies have been conducted only at the level of primary education, in Serbia in secondary schools, in Montenegro at the level of pre-university education, while in Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia they are only developed at university level.

It is worth pointing out that the participants of Star-Up Weekend have the opportunity of an alternative education through a creative activity. Most Central and Eastern European countries are participating in the Start-Up Weekend.

International Week of Entrepreneurship or Global Entrepreneurship Week is the world's largest event for innovators and creators to launch their enterprise. For a week in November in 140 countries around the world, various activities are taking place at national and regional level to promote entrepreneurship among young people.

SIFE was founded in 1975 and since 2012, known as SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise), is a non-profit organization that works with a business leader in higher education and mobilizes students to contribute to the development of their local community through different student's competitions in order to improve the quality and living standards of the community through entrepreneurship.

The influence of education on the affinity for entrepreneurship has been the subject of several studies. According to Gendron (2004) in today's business and educational context, there is no room to consider entrepreneurship as a vocational education course, but rather to evaluate the methods and the contents conveyed and their impact on students' entrepreneurial process. Entrepreneurship has increasingly been seen as an important component of university curricula all over the world. Not only is the subject taught at business schools, but natural science and technology students alike are also being offered elective courses in entrepreneurship as part of their educational programs (Shih & Huang, 2017).

Entrepreneurship education curriculum is nowadays even more important than it was before. Contemporary entrepreneurship education is not based only on gaining theoretical knowledge, but is strongly focused to increase of creative thinking skills, idea generation and innovations, resulting also with self-employment. Entrepreneurship education key objective is to develop entrepreneurial competencies with students, enabling them to get employed but also to create new and innovative businesses, so as to encourage youngsters to use their creative side for benefits of their societies (Bikse et al., 2014). Universities have key role, of course in close cooperation with businesses and governments, in creating and supporting local economy oriented towards entrepreneurship,

being the main generator of new knowledge and ideas and generating new students and scientists (Lautenschlaeger & Haase, 2011).

Paper research and findings can be very useful to policy makers when making decisions and adopting policies related to entrepreneurship, with aim of economic growth and employment increase. In the medium to long term, sustained competitiveness in the global economy will depend on technological-based strengths. These include the ability to apply new technology, to access successfully new markets, to develop new products, to incorporate best practice in the management of enterprises and to develop skill levels across the full spectrum of the labor force (Yildirim & Askun, 2012).

3. Methodology

Rebus research methodology was developed with aim to identify and analyse common practices of entrepreneurship education specially focusing on the interface between formal and informal learning in the education sector and possible connections to validation practices in partner's countries (Western Balkan countries and Russia).

A survey technique was employed for the following target groups (Rebus project, 2017):

- Educational stakeholders
- Potential employers (Enterprises, Industry, NGOs, Public employers)
- The learners (Students/learners in formal education)

Rebus research methodology was performed by each partner of the project through 3 parts (Rebus project, 2017):

1) A comprehensive desk research which encompassed:
   - Entrepreneurship in practice;
   - Entrepreneurship Education;
   - Learning technologies in higher education;
   - Experiences with blended learning in higher education;
   - Job related Competences and Informal learning and Validation
2) An online questionnaire which is consistent of 5 categories:
   - Introduction and statistical background data;
   - Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurship competences;
   - "Learning entrepreneurship";
   - Validation of competences
   - Digital learning
3) Interview questions for expert interviews on the Rebus topics; Interviews were done either as individual or focus groups interviews.

Each of the partners prepared summery report about desk research and one report realized with 4-5 interviewees from different target groups. The team collected approximately 800 questionnaires from all partner's countries. Noteworthy, collected data provides valuable information on the topic.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Balkan area

Analysing the research done the countries of Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo and Albania) it is visible that there are still differences in the interpretation of the concept of Entrepreneurship. So in Bosnia this is considered as development of SME, development of private business in Montenegro, the best practices that are stimulating for the both development of the public and private entrepreneurs sector in Kosovo, and the facility in organizing businesses in Albania.

But, with deeper analysis of this research of South East Balkan Countries, it can be seen that entrepreneurship as a culture and concept of economic thinking is presented as a resource, or as an agent of social (and political) change. Creating an environment for new ideas and initiatives, building a

system that stimulates and motivates people to undertake something in the business field, is the essence of social relationships designed to develop an entrepreneurial mentality. Experience has shown that the entrepreneurial behaviour of an individual or group is developed as a result of a struggle for existence (the case of the period 1990-1999 in Kosovo) or a purpose of profit, which together create the basic objective of any business. The best example of the development of entrepreneurial behaviours in the field of business and private initiatives is the behaviour of Kosovo businesses (period 1990-2000), where entrepreneurial initiatives are best illustrated, either to survive or gain in the conditions of the state's lack of right state.

The entrepreneurs' context in all the South East Balkan Countries is the same and/or with small differences. Small and Medium Enterprises mostly operate in trade and services. However, it is important to note some differences in terms of business activities within the three main sectors: companies in building construction and material construction remain the dominant activity within the industry sector; wood processing is also a dominant activity of manufacturing companies; and in the trade sector the majority of firms operate as retail stores. In the services sector the most dominant activities are within transport, hotels and tourism.

In all of researched countries, a large number of companies start their activities, but after a short while they fail, some others keep up with their activities in informal ways and some others can´t get through the local market. One of the main reasons for this situation is the lack of competent entrepreneurs, which tells us that the entrepreneurs in these Balkan countries do not possess the needed skills and attitude; in other words, there are entrepreneurs with enough knowledge but they lack the necessary skills for entrepreneurship, or vice versa.

The main actors that assist the entrepreneurs in SEB countries are Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Economy and/or Industry etc. Specific research results on main stakeholders in businesses development are presented with the table 1.

Table 1. The main stakeholders related to Entrepreneurship in South East Balkan Countries (SEBC)

No.	Stakeholders	B&H	Montenegro	Kosovo	Albania
1	American Chamber of Commerce			x	x
2	Banking Association			x	x
3	British Chamber of Commerce			x	x
4	Business Alliance	x	x	x	x
5	Business Registration Agency		x	x	x
6	Chamber of Commerce	x	x	x	x
7	German-SEBC of Commerce			x	
8	GIZ office in SEBC			x	x
9	Institute for employment	x	x		
10	Investment and Enterprise Support Agency	x		x	x
11	Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry				x
12	Ministry of Civil Affairs	x	x		
13	Ministry of development, entrepreneurship /and Craft	x	x	x	x
14	Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of SEBC	x		x	x
15	Union of Employers		x	x	

The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare in all SEBC, are oriented to assess industrial needs for certain professions and develop policies and strategies to acquire as soon as possible the missing specialists, which would help economic development of the country. In addition, in order to increase the quality of graduates, the Ministry with universities and vocational schools support upgrade of curriculum programs aiming to aling to the practical needs and the skills required by the labour market.

Some of these countries developed a Strategy of vocational education development (Kosovo (GAP, 2017. Difficulties faced by local producers (http://www.institutigap.org/documents/79608_Brick%20manufacturers%20(2).pdf), Montenegro (http://www.seecel.hr/UserDocsImages/Documents/Strategija_razvoja_strucnog_obrazovanja_Crna-Gora.pdf), Albania).

Secondary vocational schools introduced the subject of entrepreneurship as a compulsory or as an elective professional and theoretical subject, as part of the new reformed educational programs. Introduced course on entrepreneurship aims to acquire theoretical and practical knowledge in this field. Trainings for all teachers were delivered and cooperation with entrepreneurs was established. The aim of further improvement of entrepreneurial learning in formal and informal education encompasses: mandatory content of entrepreneurship through general obligatory subjects, developing entrepreneurial skills through variety activities, teacher continual training in entrepreneurship education.

According to the objectives of Higher Education institutions, and European Higher Education Area, the entrepreneurship education is developing within various bachelor and master study programs. Such area of education is established at the Faculty of Economic of all SEBC in both public and private universities. The entrepreneurship education can be also found in other faculties, like Faculty of International Economics, Finance and Business (Montenegro, Kosovo), Faculty of business, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Agriculture etc., by courses named: Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Entrepreneurial management, Entrepreneurship in Tourism and Hospitality, etc.

In some countries (Albania, Montenegro) there are master study programs for Entrepreneurship or Entrepreneurship economy.

4.2. Russian Federation area

By the mid of REBUS project implementation there are several promising results in the partner universities (Volga Tech and SIBSUTIS) of Russian Federation. The positive effect was achieved through capacity building of teachers and students on the universities level, dissemination activities raising awareness among the target groups and society about the importance of project activities and support of entrepreneurs at growth stages, as well as the staff mobilities among the consortium organisations. In this relation, the partnership and close collaboration of Russian universities with the other consortium organizations from EU and Balkan countries has been crucial for the implementation, coordination, and success of the project.

A comprehensive and iterative process was used to develop and conduct the REBUS survey during preparation phase of the project using both self-administered on-line questionnaires and face-to-face interviews with representatives of different target groups (students, university teachers, business, small and medium enterprises, and state organizations). The explicit survey goal was harmonization of the REBUS with other surveys to allow a deeper examination into how entrepreneurship education (competences) in engineering specialties determines the main driving factors in their fields of study. 342 comprehensive

questionnaires from Russian Federation were completed, which was 42% out of all REBUS respondents including other Partner countries of the consortium. The Russian universities also provided desk research reports on the situation with entrepreneurship estimation (validation) in practice (business) and education in the field of engineering and IT specialties on the country level. The surveys and desk research results were comprehensively analysed by the REBUS consortium members with respect to pay more attention during the next implementation activities of the project to the relevant outcomes (competences recognition, validation tools, training courses, blended and informal learning, skills for remote teamwork, networking, and staff/students mobility).

The Rebus project has strong mobility strategy for students and teaching staff of the Partner organisations. Representatives of Russian Universities attended three consortium management (Steering committee) meetings in Vienna (Austria), Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Duisburg-Essen (Germany). Participation in such meetings allows Russian partners to be deeper involved in the intercultural dialog on the project issues with other consortium members, as well as to be acquainted with the EU and Partner countries host Universities' research, curriculums for entrepreneurship education, infrastructure and teaching facilities. Two groups of Volga Tech and SIBSUTIS teachers took training in three days' transnational seminar "REBUS entrepreneurship learning programme" at the University of Duisburg-Essen. The aim of the seminar was to provide the teaching staff of Partner countries with systematic, rigorous and multidisciplinary approaches of developing and validation of competences in the different fields of entrepreneurship activities and theory development.

Recommendations and training materials of the REBUS Duisburg-Essen seminar thoroughly studied and analysed by the participating teachers of Russian universities. Each Russian partner (Volga Tech and SIBSUTIS) has developed two didactic modules, integrated in the study programs (curriculums) for students of technical specialities, based on the seminar presentations and materials. In Volga Tech, the module of entrepreneurship training has been adopted to several master's degree study programmes "International Cooperation in Forestry and Nature Management", "Landscape Architecture" and "Ecology and Nature Management". The module teaching staff also participates in activities of the EU funded Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence (SUFEX) at Volga Tech. The core target group is made of 34 master students of these particular programmes, of who seven are the international students. In SIBSUTIS, the trained staff developed and implementing the learning program "Digital entrepreneurship and business communication" for students studying the economy and business specialties. The SIBSUTIS training program (72 hours) is based on 5 themes, 3 projects, presentations of e-commerce and online shop projects, assessment and validation of the developed competences.

Being innovative in its didactic approaches, and more student centered, the both programmes will bring key elements of entrepreneurship and innovation from REBUS agenda to the regular curricula. Courses about entrepreneurship tended to be taught in an innovative "blended learning model" manner, through lectures, seminars, e-learning formats, case studies, essays, and assessed in an end of course written exam. Students are expected to upgrade own personal motivation for developing their entrepreneurship knowledge and skills but also attitude. Their capacity to risk in creating new ideas and consequent innovative product or service is targeted, so as their capacity for presenting new projects, improved decision making skills and communication capacities for resolving troublesome situations. However, more efforts will be requested from the student to increase the quality of entrepreneurship competences during the

study: extended networking, theoretical knowledge, finding financing facilities, practical workshops, closer contact with other students in the group to develop the entrepreneurship skills, as well as consulting are the main recommendations. Students should obtain skills necessary to realize their own entrepreneurship projects, such as needs analysis, strategic and operational planning, time management, financial issues, other 'soft skills' (proposal writing and presentation, communication skills including command in English), team work, basics of copyright and patenting their innovative ideas and products.

4.3. Summary of survey results

Total number of respondents in the online survey on entrepreneurship was 809, from different countries, professional status, gender and different age.

Percentages of respondents with respect to age (in years) are presented at Figure 1. From Figure 1. It can be seen that majority of respondents were under 31 years old.

Percentages of respondents with respect to gender are presented at Figure 2. There were 58,84 male respondents and 40,79% female respondents.

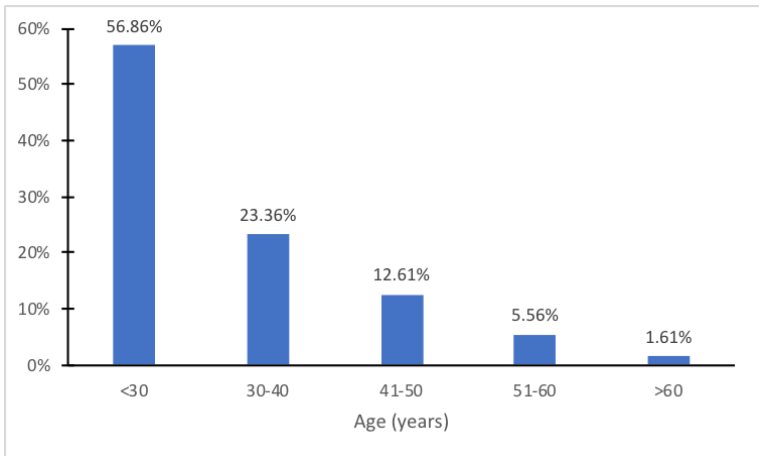

Figure 1. Percentages of respondents with respect to age (in years)

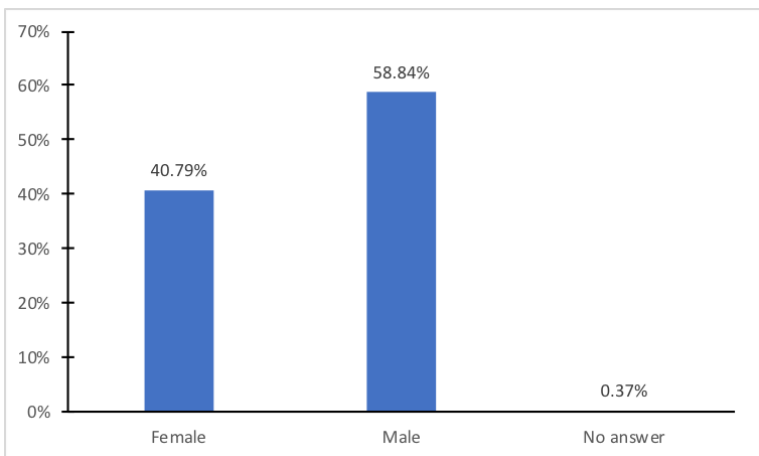

Figure 2. Percentages of respondents with respect to gender

Percentages of respondents with respect to country are presented at Figure 3. There were no responses from the following countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom and Austria. Majority of responses came from Russia (42,27%) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (32,39%).

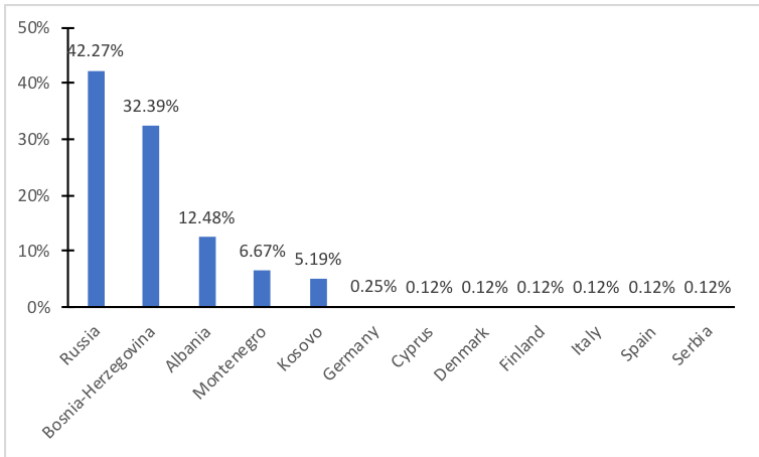

Figure 3. Percentages of respondents with respect to country

Percentages of respondents with respect to professional status are depicted at Figure 4. Majority of respondents were students (38,69%) and those coming from higher education (23,49%).

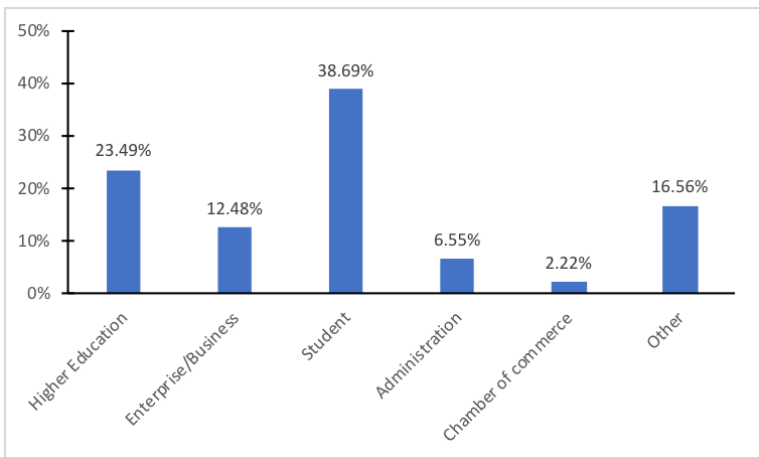

Figure 4. Percentages of respondents with respect to professional status

Knowledge of respondents about entrepreneurship is presented at Figure 5. Majority of respondents (60,49%) stated that they had medium knowledge about entrepreneurship.

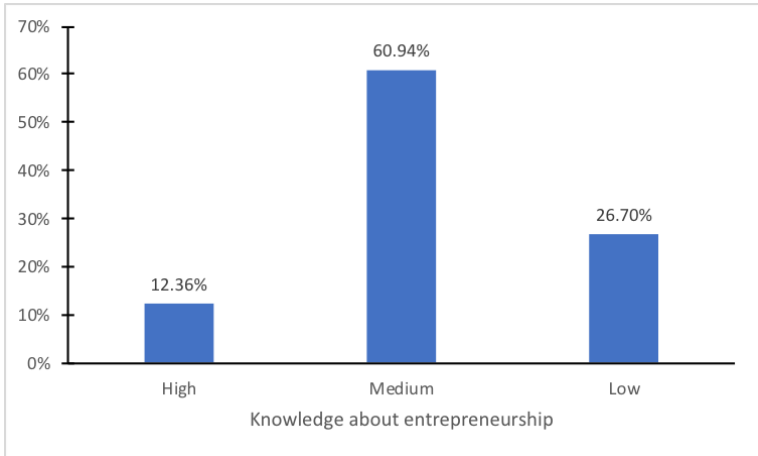

Figure 5. Knowledge of respondents about entrepreneurship

Percentages of respondents with respect to the importance of "entrepreneurship and sense of initiative" in relation to finding job are shown at Figure 6. Majority of respondents (58,96%) stated importance of "entrepreneurship and sense of initiative" in relation to finding job as very important.

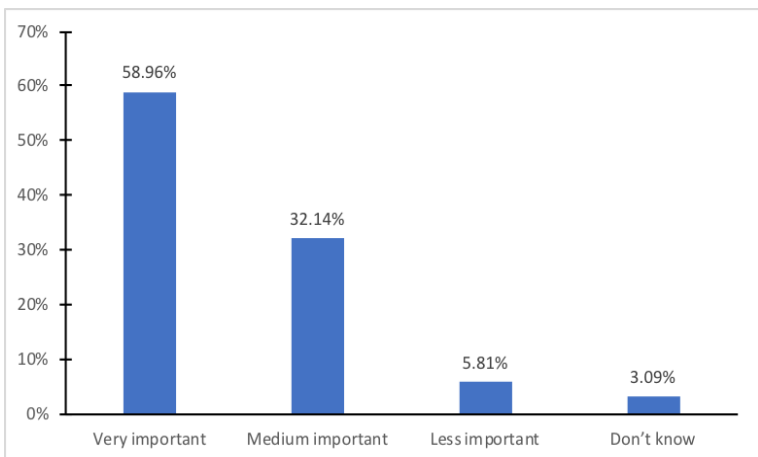

Figure 6. Importance of "entrepreneurship and sense of initiative" in relation to finding job

Percentages of respondents with respect to the importance of "entrepreneurship and sense of initiative" in relation to further career development are shown at Figure 7. Majority of respondents (68,36%) stated importance of "entrepreneurship and sense of initiative" in relation to further career development as very important.

Percentages of respondents with respect to the importance of "entrepreneurship and sense of initiative" in relation to continuing professional development are shown at Figure 8. Majority of respondents (67,12%) stated importance of "entrepreneurship and sense of initiative" in relation to continuing professional development as very important.

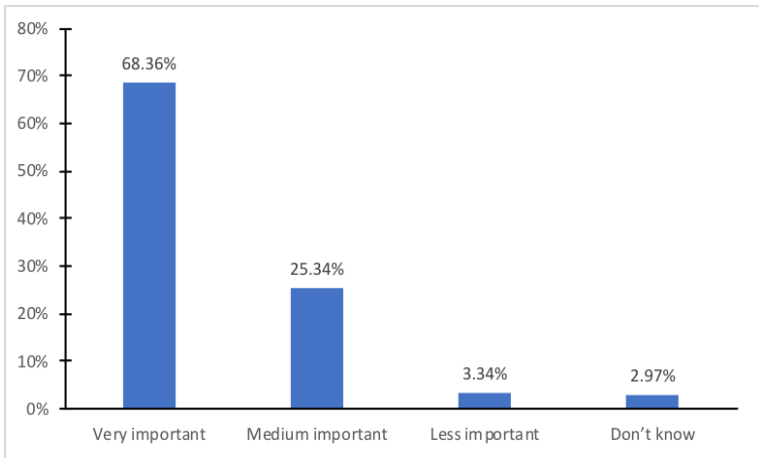

Figure 7. Importance of "entrepreneurship and sense of initiative" in relation to further career development

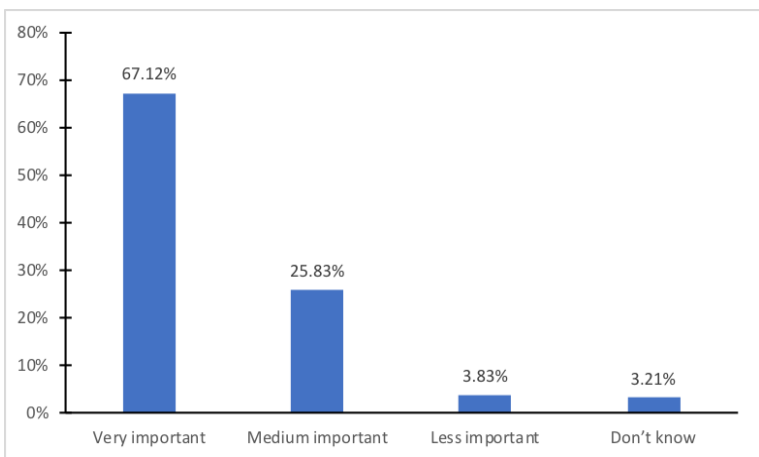

Figure 8. Importance of "entrepreneurship and sense of initiative" in relation to continuing professional development

Percentages of responses with respect to the awareness of any learning programme, learning activity to promote the acquisition of entrepreneurial competences are depicted at Figure 9. One can see that majority of respondents (84,67%) stated that they are not aware any learning programme, learning activity to promote the acquisition of entrepreneurial competences.

Percentages of responses with respect to the question "Do you have an idea about the validation of competences" is shown at Figure 10.

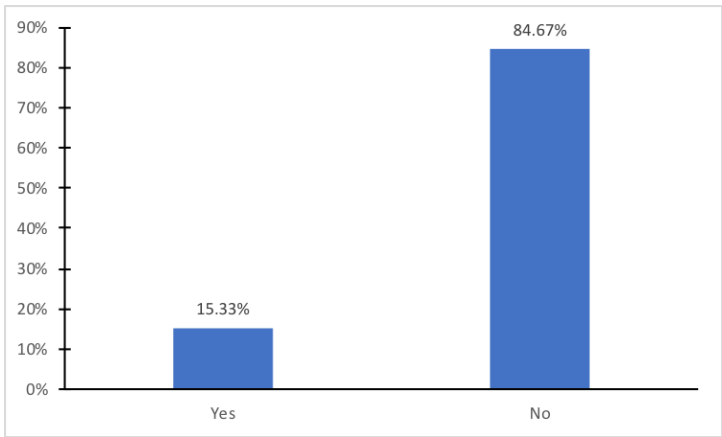

Figure 9. Awareness of any learning programme, learning activity to promote the acquisition of entrepreneurial competences

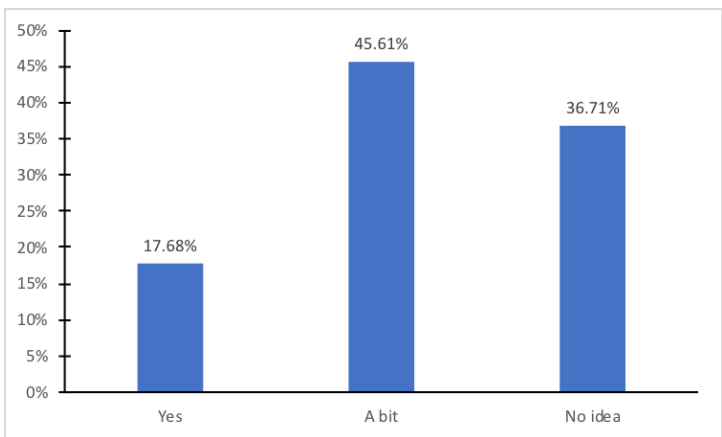

Figure 10. Having an idea about the validation of competences

One can see that 36,71% of respondents stated that they have no idea about the validation of competences, while 45,61% stated that they know a bit about the validation of competences. Only 17,68% of respondents have an idea about the validation of competences.

5. Conclusions

European employers today are more and more focused soft skills of potential employees, like creative thinking and entrepreneurship. The key competencies recommendation 2006/962 / EC related to the lifelong learning underlines such competences' importance for people's employability.

Entrepreneurship competences development have extreme importance in EU accession and neighbouring countries. They perform transition to market economies and are aiming to align with the EU social, legal and economic standards. Employers from these countries clearly recognize lack of such soft skills and competences with graduating students, even more with the ICT and engineering students where such orientation could be more expected. SEE countries and Russia youngsters are often reluctant to utilize own initiatives to private businesses or to use own entrepreneurship potentials for self-employment. They prefer employments

in public sector, considering them safe in terms of employment and salary payments. There are not aware of own entrepreneurship potentials within the local markets, what is an obstacle to development of local societies.

This paper presents the significance of Entrepreneurship Education in less developed European countries, like those from South East Europe area or Russia. Balkan countries generally have a different view (focus) on entrepreneurship, but in all the countries where the research is done it can be said that economic and political situation in the country have a great influence on Entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurs' context in all the South East Balkan countries is the same or very little different. Small and medium Enterprises mostly operate in trade and services.

The explicit survey goal was harmonization of the REBUS with other surveys to allow a deeper examination into how entrepreneurship education (competences) in engineering specialties determines the main driving factors in their fields of study. According to the objectives of Higher Education institutions, and European Higher Education Area, the entrepreneurship education is developing within various bachelor and master study programs.

Total number of respondents in the online survey on entrepreneurship was 809, from different countries, professional status, gender and different age. The largest number of respondents were from Russia and from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Professional status of the respondents was the dominant student (about 38%). The survey showed that most respondents have a medium level of entrepreneurial knowledge, while over 60% of respondents consider Entrepreneurship Education as an important aspect for finding a job, career development and personal competence.

The respondents confirmed the assumption that there is a very low level of awareness of any learning program or learning activity to promote the acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies. The most of respondent have a bit or no idea about the validation of entrepreneurial competences.

As a general conclusion of this paper, it can be said that it is necessary to work on the development of entrepreneurial competences for students, through the improvement of study programs, student exchange and mobility in order to improve knowledge.

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* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence