

EDUCATION IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN KOSOVO

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*If we don't change, we don't grow.
If we don't grow, we aren't really living"*
Gail Sheehy, Author

Abstract

The present paper aims to analyse the development of the Education Entrepreneurship in Republic of Kosovo. In order to analyse this topic and write this paper, I have studied the relevant literature which shaped the Education entrepreneurship in Kosovo. Additional to that, different officials from the relevant Ministries has been directly contacted. Through this document we are trying to recover and examine the way in which the education entrepreneurship in Kosovo is developed. Education in Entrepreneurship aims to produce graduates with the mindset and skills to come up with the new ideas.

Background

Kosovo is the youngest state in Europe. On 17th February 2008, the Government of Kosovo has unilaterally declared its independence. Despite being unilateral, the independence of Kosovo was coordinated with the main international community actors, such as main European countries and the United States of America and soon after the declaration the first recognitions were made to the statehood of Kosovo. Let us recall that independence was declared following eventful decades full of tension.

Let us look now at some of the general social and economic indicators of Kosovo that will enable an understanding of the context in which the government of Kosovo has shaped Education in Entrepreneurship for its citizens. Before looking to the indicators that follow, there is a need to make a point about figures and statistics in general in Kosovo. (WB 2010)

Kosovo is facing enormous challenges in its economic development and it is actually labelled as the poorest state in Europe, comparable to countries in Africa. The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in 2007 was merely € 1'573 and the economic growth is quite slow, with a growth of only 5. 4 percent marked in 2008.

The level of poverty in Kosovo is very high, with 14 percent of the population living in extreme poverty (< 1USD/day) and 44 percent living in poverty (<2USD/day). It goes without saying that unemployment is extremely high in Kosovo, at the range of 41. 5%. The unemployment problem is strikingly high for the young population aged 15-25 years, which amounted to 70. 9 percent in 2005.

The Human Development Index (HDI) lists Kosovo among medium human development countries, but the lowest among countries of Europe. The HDI is not measured systematically in Kosovo. The latest HDI measurement dates 2004 and ranks Kosovo with an index of 0. 734. The figure is extracted from components such as life expectancy index, education attainment index and adjusted GDP index. (HDI 2006)

Human Capital, Demographic developments and education

Young population is considered a key asset for Kosovo development. However youth are disproportionately affected by unemployment and poverty (KAS, 2013;). Only 23 % of youth aged 15-24 years are active in the labor market whereas nearly 60 % of youth active in the labor market are unemployed. Another striking feature of Kosovo youth is that 35 % belong to the NEET category, representing a youth that is not in employment, not in education and not in training. Given that the

high share of youth is disconnected both from the labor market and education it can be more of a burden rather than contributor to the development. Therefore educating youth and accommodating them in the labor market remains a great challenge ahead.

With regards to unemployment duration, regardless of gender, most unemployed individuals remain unemployed about one year later (Winkler, 2014). Most men move to employment whereas most women stop looking for a job (Winkler, 2014).

Unemployment, the associated poverty and low GDP per capita are the most pressing problems in Kosovo and there is an urgent need for additional economic growth to create more jobs. Private sector development policies will play a crucial role in facilitating export-led economic growth in Kosovo and promote Kosovo's integration into the world economy. (Employment Promotion Performance Report, 2007)

In addition, companies report dissatisfaction with the skills levels of workers with secondary education (including vocational schools) and with university degree, even though they possess qualification and should be prepared for the labour market. (Giz Baseline Study 2011).

Although discussions on workers' **education and skills** usually focus on higher education, namely on higher secondary level, in Kosovo labour market there is a need for general skills to be developed during the whole schooling cycle. (New Curriculum Framework). Kosovo companies report training needs for communication skills (foreign languages and mother language), problem and conflict solving skills, mathematical-numeric skills, client-oriented services, etc. ()

Based on the new curriculum framework, the development of competences for life and work should drive curriculum development and classroom practices. The policy covering pre-university education defines the system of competences as: knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions and routines thus making aiming for applied knowledge and well planned end results in students. The learner based on the competencies communication and expression develops competencies of effective communicator, thinking competencies of creative thinker, learning competencies of successful learner, life, work and environment-related competencies of productive contributor, personal competencies of healthy individual and civic competencies of responsible citizen. (KKK 2011)

Status of Education in Entrepreneurship in Kosovo

In the sector of education, two of most important policies the Kosovo Education Strategic Plan (KESP) 2011-2016 the New Kosovo Curriculum Framework (KCF) have a focus on skills. The KESP sets the vision for the education sector up until 2016 and covers all the levels of education from kindergarten to the higher education. Specific attention is also given to the adult education, non-formal education, career guidance and teacher training. The skills relevance to the labour market is linked particularly to vocational and higher education. By 2014 vocational education and training curricula are foreseen to be in line with the needs of the labour market. Labour market driven research and scientific work is additionally planned for higher education. (Strategy for Development of Higher Education in Kosovo 2005)

The KESP also foresees the appropriate frames that support the skills are to be established such as National Qualifications Framework, Performance Assessment Framework as well as the institutional structures and bodies such as National Career Guidance Center, Kosovo Accreditation Agency, the National Qualifications Authority (NQA), Agency for Vocational Education and more to support skill development and inter-ministerial cooperation's to possible link of supply and demand.

Kosovo Government has spent efforts in the development of numerous strategies in the recent years. At present, there are sector based strategies in place that provide a vision for the development of each sector, some of which with a detailed action plan. None of the planned activities in the operational plans accompanying the strategies have been implemented as foreseen. This is due not only to unrealistic planning but also to low programming and implementation capacities at all levels of the sector, central and regional. (EC Progress Report 2007)

The Strategy for Entrepreneurship Education and Training of Kosovo aims to provide all students and adult learners with practical and theoretical insight into entrepreneurship. The strategy has been elaborated by a cross-ministerial taskforce (education, labour, trade and industry) in co-operation with the world of business.

It calls for teacher training and curriculum reform to ensure that entrepreneurship as a key competence is addressed in compulsory education, with entrepreneurship as an elective subject in secondary education. The strategy also gives particular emphasis to promotion of entrepreneurship in third-level education, ensuring a lifelong learning dimension to entrepreneurship.

The topic of Education in Entrepreneurship is covered by different strategies such as:

- Kosovo Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016 (MEST)
- Strategy For Development Of Higher Education In Kosovo 2005-2015 (MEST)
- Strategy For Improvement Of Professional Practice In Kosovo 2013 – 2016 (MEST, MLSW)
- Draft Strategy And Action Plan For Career Guidance And Counseling 2013-2016 (MEST, MCYS, MLSW)
- New Kosovo Curriculum Framework KCF (MEST)
- Kosovo strategy for Youth, Culture and Sport 2013 - 2017(MYCS)

From the economic point of view, several policies are in place that refer to a limited degree to HRD and skills lead mostly. Provision of training and entrepreneurship skills are mentioned in the Kosovo Youth, Culture and Sport strategy 2013-2017 amongst others. Two inter-ministerial strategies the strategy for Career Guidance and Counseling provide vision for the development of career education and guidance in all levels of education both as guidance and as education provided in the schools while the Strategy for Improvement of Professional Practices supports the development of practical skills of Vocational Education students through the links of education with employers. (KAS 2013a) New Kosovo Curriculum Framework revised framework promotes a competency-based approach, developed through practically-oriented learning. It foresees an enormous shift from a content-based to a competency-based curriculum aiming to mobilize the potential of Kosovo youth to compete successfully in the labour market locally and abroad. The goal of the new curriculum framework is to maximize the potential benefits that may be derived from a growing number of educated youth and to lead to improvements of Kosovo's society, economy and environment in order to bring it into closer alignment with advanced western European societies.

Primary Education

Currently the situation of Entrepreneurship Education is difficult to identify. There are some pockets of good practice but most of this occurs as extra-curricular activity but there is a need to create something more sustainable. The primary school curriculum is much overloaded but there is the possibility of the inclusion of some Entrepreneurship Education within the Citizenship module. (Strategy for Pre-university Education 2007–2017)

Lower Secondary Education

The overloaded curriculum is being revised and where it exists Entrepreneurship Education is often part of another syllabus. There is pilot scheme in 24 schools for which 44 teachers received training to deliver 6 short programmes. This pilot provided a starting point for some schools using the Young Enterprise scheme but is no longer funded and will be replaced by new Entrepreneurship Education programmes. (Strategy for Pre-university Education 2007–2017)

Upper Secondary

A similar picture – there is a need to shape Entrepreneurship Education within the Citizenship and other programmes. The above scheme was also operational in the Upper Secondary sector, but is to be replaced with new Entrepreneurship Education programmes as funding is no longer available. Quality of secondary school graduates is an issue since 70% of students do not pass a Matura exam This is a great concern and needs to be assessed why it happens and what needs to be done. There is insufficient investment in education. (KKKa 2011)

Vocational Education

The picture is brighter in the EU-funded and EAR managed KOSVET 1 pilot schools which have been using the Entrepreneurship module developed for Year 12. There are also examples where VET schools have used the On the Job Training module of the same curriculum as time when learners can have experience in a school practice firm. The practice firms have been developed by Swiss Contact and Eco Net and are currently operating in some VET and Economic schools. They have had significant success in making local industry and commerce aware of the school activities and have also aided employment of young person's completing the school programme. . In vocational education and training meeting the needs of the labour market does not refer to specific economic sectors and subsectors that are recognized as economic trends e. g. agriculture, energy etc. The practical skills of the vocational education students that represent over 50% of the overall number of secondary education still face enormous difficulties to develop practical skills both at the school and enterprise base. (ETF 2009)

Higher Education

Since years, higher education in Kosovo is faced with many problems, concerns about the infrastructure and the quality. As in many transition countries, immediately after the war are open to higher education institutions. Of course, quality has always been questionable. The topic Entrepreneurship came just in theory, no practice.

Currently in Kosovo, we have a boom of public universities, already in an area of 10, 000 square meters, we have six public universities, and additional to that we have over 30 private colleges, approximately 80, 000 students. Kosovo has reached 70% access to higher education, which in 1999 only 15%. Cooperation with the private sector is very small, except for some Faculties; educational institutions in general, have never managed to succeed in this regard. In relation to the research Kosovo is very in bad situation. (MEST, Assessment of education sector strategy)

- 6 research universities
- 1 older university
- Extremely limited research
- No commercialization
- 1 Industry Advisory Board only (Faculty of Engineering at UP)

From another point of view the private higher educations are not able to fulfill the requirements coming out from the labor market. The higher Education private Institutions are very small and their profiles are mostly business, law, and social sciences. Unfortunately, there is no interest to provide something in natural science. Profiles and quality produced by higher education is far from the labour market needs. There is a need for evaluation of the higher education with a view to ensure the supply of skills which the market requires. Higher education shows even greater imbalance between education and economy. The profiles in the higher education do not match the labour market needs be it in the number of registered students or the provision of profiles on sectors like mining, energy and other potential sectors. This stands true also for private higher institutions. Higher education institutions receive not only a larger number of students but also students with low level of skills due to previous education and lack of opportunities to join the labour market. If current secondary students had good preparation for the labour market, local and international, they would be more likely to get a job and not pursue higher education. (KAS 2013)

Non Formal Education and Entrepreneurship

Academics and professionals in human resource management (HRM) have identified that training policies are critical for improving employee skills, firm performance, and organizational survival. (Schüler 2001). Kosovo Economy has made significant achievements. According to the local experts it has been arrived thanks to the non-formal education. Mainly, in the certification and accreditation of different products.

Based on the mentioned facts that the education system in Kosovo is not able to provide quality service at who answers but also in entrepreneurship learning, many other institutions have offered training services in the field of entrepreneurship education as well many different projects, many institutions, non-governmental organizations. Through the support of the World Bank, the Ministry of Youth has provided training for the young's entrepreneurs. Dutch and the Swiss government have supported the entrepreneurship and employment of youth doing their training. There are a large number of local organizations, representatives of businesses that provide numerous trainings for strengthening the knowledge in entrepreneurship. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare through 6 training centres offering training for the unemployed people about the entrepreneurship. KCC with the support of the German government has offered entrepreneurship training in three directions, for manufacturing enterprises, for women in business and for young girls on how to enter the business. Kosovo Chamber of Commerce is in the way to establish the Entrepreneurship Academy. (OEK Buletini mujor 2013)

Conclusions

- i) Legal and strategic documents are in place.
- ii) Poor cooperation between education system and business community leads to poor quality of education system
- iii) There are numerous institutional structures as National Socio-Economic Council, Agency for Vocational Education, National Curriculum Council and many other structures foreseen to support the implementation of the strategies.
- iv) There is a need for matching the education and labor market needs
- v) there is no data available on the share of employment of those interns upon completion of internship engagement
- vi) There is a need for recognizing the importance of different player in the education
- vii) Life Long learning is very important in the process of the education in the entrepreneurship
- viii) Private sector involvement in policy design and training (apprenticeship, world based learning, internships etc) remains problematic.
- ix) Generally, the links between science, innovation and economy are almost non-existent. .

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