



Entrepreneurial skills and competences throughout life

Webinar summary

26/06/2025

Webinar Summary: Entrepreneurial skills and competences throughout life

The "Entrepreneurial Skills and Competences Throughout Life" webinar was held on June 26, 2025, under the Community for Educational Innovation (CEI) initiative supported by the European Commission.

The webinar explored the role of entrepreneurial skills and competences across various stages of education, from secondary education to lifelong learning. It discussed how entrepreneurial competences are integrated into different education systems and their impact on personal and professional growth. The webinar aimed to explore how entrepreneurial skills contribute to career development, innovation, and lifelong learning in the context of the European Union's education policies.

This summary report synthesises the key insights shared during the event, providing an overview of the presentations, main takeaways, and an outline of the upcoming activities.

Presentation 1: Entrepreneurial Skills Pass: From Experience to Evidence in Secondary Education

Joanna Andrzejewska, Head of Programmes at Junior Achievement Europe (JA Europe)

Joanna Andrzejewska kicked off the webinar by introducing the [Entrepreneurial Skills Pass \(ESP\)](#), a micro-credential designed to assess entrepreneurial competences in secondary education. ESP targets students aged 15 to 19, offering an internationally recognised qualification that demonstrates their acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes enabling them to succeed in entrepreneurship. The

ESP is embedded within the [JA Company Programme](#), a hands-on initiative that simulates the entrepreneurial journey. Students form and manage real businesses during the school year, engaging in market research, product development, financial management, and the creation of business plans. The learning culminates in the opportunity to earn the ESP certificate.

Andrzejewska highlighted that one of the key successes of ESP is its role in helping students transition from learning to earning, offering real-world learning experiences that enhance employability. In addition to the ESP's primary function of certifying skills, it also serves as a valuable feedback loop for local educators to refine their entrepreneurship programmes, ensuring that they meet students' needs and improve educational outcomes.

The presentation also delved into how ESP has evolved over the years. Initially launched with just 15 countries, it has expanded significantly, offering assessments in 26 languages. Over 70,000 students from 67 countries were certified by May 2025. Andrzejewska pointed out that the scalability of ESP is crucial to its ongoing success, and its adaptability across countries provides valuable insight into how entrepreneurship education can be tailored to local contexts while maintaining international standards. However, the implementation of ESP faces challenges due to the diversity of local contexts in which the JA Company Programme is delivered. The programme adapts to national legal frameworks, cultural contexts, and educational systems, meaning the assessment must account for varying levels of engagement and the time students spend in the programme.

Looking to the future, JA Europe plans to develop modular and stackable versions of the ESP, allowing students to gain recognition for specific entrepreneurial competences as they progress through their education and careers. The future of



ESP also includes incorporating emerging skills such as AI and sustainability, which are becoming increasingly relevant in the global entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Presentation 2: Entrepreneurship Competences in VET: Insights from a European Study

Dmitrijs Kuļšs, Expert specialising in key competences and vocational education and training (VET) policies and systems at European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)

Dmitrijs Kuļšs presented insights from the European study [Entrepreneurship competences in vocational education and training in Europe](#). The study, conducted as part of Cedefop's initiative to address the [Communication from the European Commission on the Union of Skills](#) and tackle the entrepreneurial skills gap in Europe, explored how VET providers across EU Member States are incorporating entrepreneurship into their curricula. Kuļšs highlighted the importance of embedding entrepreneurship competences in VET to improve the employability of young people and better equip them for the modern labour market. As entrepreneurial skills are essential for business creation and fostering innovation and leadership within existing enterprises, their integration into vocational training is a key component of Europe's efforts to remain competitive globally.

The study revealed several challenges, particularly around the conceptualisation and delivery of entrepreneurship in VET. One major issue is the differing definitions of entrepreneurship in policy documents versus its application at the provider level. While policy tends to support a broad understanding of entrepreneurship that includes innovation, risk management, and leadership, VET providers often narrow their focus to business creation and startup support. This disconnection leads to inconsistencies in how entrepreneurship is taught and the outcomes it delivers. Kuļšs also pointed out that the integration of entrepreneurship competences is not

a uniform process across the European Union. While some countries have embraced entrepreneurship as a transversal competence across multiple disciplines, others have restricted it to dedicated subjects or specific VET programmes. The lack of a cohesive, cross-sectoral approach has resulted in an uneven impact on students' entrepreneurial abilities.

The presentation also explored how the VET environment influences the development of entrepreneurial competences. Kuļšs identified several barriers, including a lack of teacher training and industry experience, as well as an overburdened curriculum that prioritises technical skills over entrepreneurial thinking. Despite these challenges, the study found that successful VET providers integrate entrepreneurship competences through project-based learning, work-based learning, and collaboration with industry. Moreover, teacher professional development and continuous collaboration with external partners are essential to improving the quality and impact of entrepreneurship education in VET. Moving forward, Kuļšs called for more coherent policy frameworks to support the scaling of effective entrepreneurship education practices across Europe, especially those that encourage transversal and cross-disciplinary approaches.

Presentation 3: Building Bridges: Enhancing Entrepreneurial Education and Regional Innovation – The Case of Contamination Lab in Pisa

Alessio Cavicchi, Professor and Rector's Delegate for the Promotion of Entrepreneurial Culture and Innovation at University of Pisa

Alessio Cavicchi introduced the [Contamination Lab Pisa \(CLab\)](#), a dynamic initiative that bridges entrepreneurial education and regional innovation. Initially established as a platform for PhD students to learn about entrepreneurship, the lab has evolved into a multidisciplinary space that fosters innovation across the entire university. Cavicchi discussed how CLab Pisa provides various training formats,

including short courses, hackathons, and deep-dive sessions in different sectors like fashion, wellness, and deep tech. These activities aim to engage students, researchers, and local businesses in co-creation, helping to build an innovation ecosystem that addresses academic and regional needs.

A central feature of the programme is its emphasis on regional collaboration. The lab works closely with local stakeholders, including businesses, public authorities, and civil society to identify key challenges and opportunities for innovation. Through this process, CLab Pisa promotes entrepreneurial education within the university and drives regional development. Cavicchi explained that one of the key goals of the lab is to help students understand the social responsibility of entrepreneurship, particularly in the context of sustainable development. The lab has become a focal point for university-business collaboration, providing a platform for students to engage with real-world challenges and create solutions that contribute to their communities. This emphasis on regional innovation aligns with the university's vision of becoming a Civic University, engaging with society to create mutual value and social impact.

Since its establishment, CLab Pisa has made notable strides in developing a culture of innovation within the university. Cavicchi detailed how the governance structure has evolved, focusing more on international collaboration and systemic innovation. The lab now hosts various initiatives, such as [Start For Future](#), an Alliance funded by [EIT-HEI initiative](#), which helps develop sustainable business models inspired by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This collaborative approach has enabled CLab Pisa to expand its reach, working with over 30 European universities and incubators. In the future, the lab aims to continue strengthening its role as a hub for entrepreneurial education and regional innovation, enhancing its international partnerships by making the most of Start For Future and [Circle U. Alliance](#) (one of the European Universities Alliances) and

contributing to developing a more inclusive, sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Presentation 4: Flexible, Inclusive, and Future-Ready: How EIT Campus Supports Lifelong Entrepreneurship

Luisa Esposito, Education Project Manager at EIT Urban Mobility

Luisa Esposito presented the [EIT Campus](#), a pan-European digital learning platform that supports lifelong entrepreneurship. Esposito discussed how the platform addresses the evolving needs of learners throughout their careers, offering flexible, modular courses that allow individuals to upskill and reskill as they navigate an ever-changing labour market. With a focus on multidisciplinary courses and interdisciplinary learning pathways, EIT Campus helps learners build entrepreneurial competencies across various sectors, including urban mobility, climate, health, energy, and digital technologies. Esposito emphasised that entrepreneurial skills are not limited to those who start businesses—they are essential across all fields, enabling individuals to innovate within institutions, drive sustainable transitions, and contribute meaningfully to society.

One of the key features of EIT Campus is its inclusive approach to learning. Esposito highlighted that the platform is open to a wide range of learners, including students, teachers, researchers, policymakers, and professionals. The modular nature of the courses means that learners can tailor their education to suit their specific needs and career goals. EIT Campus also integrates applied learning, using real-world projects and case studies to ensure students acquire knowledge and gain the confidence and skills to act, lead, and innovate. This focus on applied learning is a core aspect of the platform's commitment to fostering entrepreneurial thinking at all stages of life.

Esposito also discussed the importance of entrepreneurial mindsets, particularly in the context of the green and digital transitions. She argued that fostering skills such as problem-solving, creativity, resilience, and leadership is crucial for ensuring that individuals can lead and innovate in response to societal challenges. The EIT Campus offers opportunities for learners to build these competences, preparing them to navigate complex issues such as climate change, digital transformation, and social inclusion. The platform's emphasis on cross-sector collaboration ensures that learners can engage with diverse perspectives, enhancing their ability to tackle global challenges. Looking ahead, EIT Campus aims to continue expanding its reach, offering a growing number of interdisciplinary courses that meet the needs of both individuals and institutions across Europe.

Key Takeaways

The webinar provided several key insights into the integration of entrepreneurial skills throughout life:

- **Entrepreneurial skills are vital across all sectors:** Beyond business creation, entrepreneurial competences such as problem-solving, creativity, and leadership are crucial across academia, policy, and industry. These skills help individuals innovate within organisations and tackle global issues like sustainability and digitalisation.
- **Flexible, modular, and interdisciplinary learning is essential:** Traditional education systems need to evolve into more adaptable, modular pathways that accommodate learners at all stages of their careers. Platforms like EIT Campus exemplify this by offering flexible courses accessible to students, researchers, and professionals alike.
- **Regional and international collaboration boosts impact:** Entrepreneurial education benefits from partnerships with local businesses, government,

and international networks. Initiatives like Contamination Lab Pisa show the power of collaborative, cross-border efforts in scaling opportunities for students and fostering innovation ecosystems.

- **Sustainability, inclusivity, and a cultural shift are needed:** Successful integration of entrepreneurship requires institutions to embrace sustainability, inclusion, and a cultural shift towards innovation. Education systems must create environments where entrepreneurial thinking is a core aspect of all disciplines, supported by leadership commitment and cross-disciplinary collaboration.
- **Experiential, challenge-based learning is crucial:** Hands-on, real-world learning experiences—such as JA Europe’s Company Programme—are key to developing entrepreneurial skills. These approaches provide students with the confidence and practical knowledge to launch businesses or lead innovation within existing organisations.
- **Challenges in embedding entrepreneurship:** Significant challenges are the gap between policy and practice and the inconsistent implementation across countries. Education systems often face barriers such as a lack of teacher training, overburdened curricula, and resistance to change, all of which hinder the effective integration of entrepreneurial competences.

Upcoming Activities

The webinar on ‘Entrepreneurial skills and competences throughout life’ marked the culmination of CEI’s thematic strand 1: "Entrepreneurial skills and mindsets in education." Looking ahead, the second thematic strand starting in autumn 2025 will explore ‘Research to Impact: Bridging the innovation gap in higher education.’ This series will focus on topics such as external stakeholder partnerships, innovation funding, and capacity building. Complementing these webinars, a second study visit is planned for November 2025 in Austria. Together, these initiatives aim to



further the conversation on scaling, adapting, and integrating educational innovation into education systems to cultivate entrepreneurship, inclusion, and sustainability throughout Europe.

Engagement opportunities:

- **Collection of Good Practices:** CEI Members are invited to submit **good practices** on Entrepreneurial skills and competences throughout life. These practices could be featured in the **CEI report on Thematic Strand 1**, providing valuable insights for future educational reforms. [Submit your good practices here.](#)
- **Monthly Poll:** CEI Members are invited to participate in our monthly poll by answering the question, '**Which do you consider the most important enablers for fostering entrepreneurial skills and competences throughout life?**' [Participate in the poll here.](#)