

YEBE Project

Youth for Entrepreneurship and Business Ethics



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University survey on business ethics and entrepreneurship education (Comparative Report)

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Introduction

Project summary

The YEBE project aims to **promote entrepreneurship education and social entrepreneurship among young people**, helping them to:

- a) **explore and develop their entrepreneurial initiative**
- b) **develop and improve their leadership skills and**
- c) **acquire knowledge about business ethics and reflect the ethical dimensions of leadership in business in the context of a “highly competitive Social Market Economy” (Lisbon treaty).**

The project will give thrust to entrepreneurship education in Europe by developing and testing an entirely new innovative program of non-formal entrepreneurship education and training that should be complementary to both university studies, trainee programs and further training activities of young professionals. This program will be based on the concept of “Social Market Economy” and shall promote a cultural change in the attitudes towards a modern concept of business ethics.

The project objectives will be realized through the realization of the following **outputs**:

O1 – Youth Code of Business Ethics, written by the students and the young professionals involved in the project. They will do this by reflecting their personal experience during their internships and/or first years of professional practice and based on important documents of their respective religious traditions.

O2 – Youth Lexicon on Social Market Economy, written by the students and the young professionals involved in the project. They will do this by reflecting their personal experience during their internships and/or first years of professional practice and based on available documents and literature.

O3 – University survey on business ethics and entrepreneurship education, conducted in each participating country, in order to identify the attention that universities training programs and postgraduate courses pay to business ethics issues and entrepreneurial skills in the context of the social market economy.

O4 – Business survey on business ethics, compliance and CSR, conducted in each participating country, in order to identify the attention that training programs and other business activities pay to business ethics issues, compliance, Corporate Social Responsibility, leadership and other soft skills. The research will also enquire about the understanding that executives of the companies have about the concept of Social Market Economy.

O5 – Innovative Training Concept for Youth Entrepreneurship and Business Ethics, which will be based on the university and business surveys results. The “concept” of a non-formal education and formation program, elaborated by the partnership, will be complementary both to academic studies and training or on the job training programs. The program will help students and young people at the beginning of their professional career to develop their entrepreneurial initiative, develop and improve their leadership skills, as well as acquire knowledge about business ethics and reflect the ethical dimensions of leadership in business.

Partners list:

Coordinator	BKU – Bund Katholischer Unternehmer (Germany)
Partner	Center for Corporate Citizenship (Germany)
Partner	UCID – Unione Cristiana Imprenditori e Dirigenti (Italy)
Partner	CONFORM Consulenza Formazione e Management S.C.A.R.L (Italy)
Partner	KERME – Keresztény Ertekmegorzo Egyesület (Hungary)
Partner	Napra Forgó Nonprofit Közhasznú Kft (Hungary)
Partner	ZKPS – Zdruzenje krscanskih poslovnezev Slovenije (Slovenia)
Partner	Socialna akademija (Slovenia)
Partner	ADIC – Association chrétienne des dirigeants et cadres (Belgium)

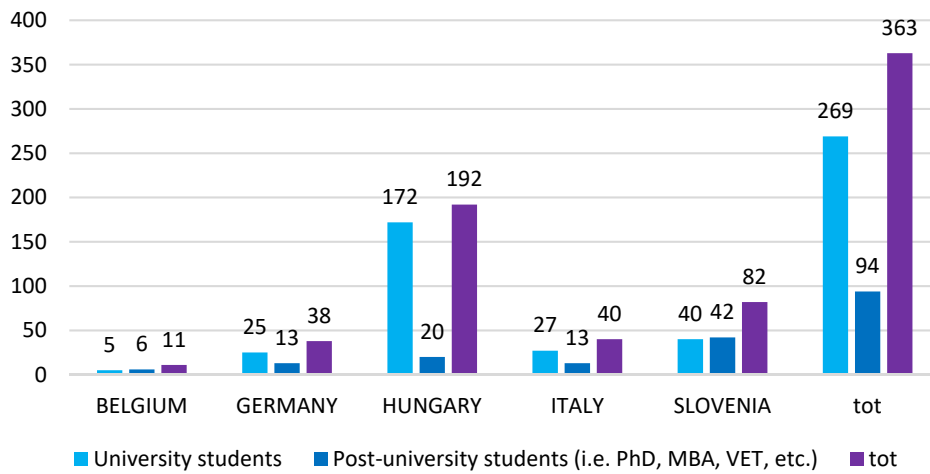
Reporting of results of the “University survey on business ethics and entrepreneurship education”

General Section of the questionnaire

a) Students involved in the survey (number and education levels – question n. 1)

The university survey on business ethics and entrepreneurship education saw the involvement of 363 students, of whom 269 were university students and 94 were postgraduates, from the 5 partnership countries as highlighted below.

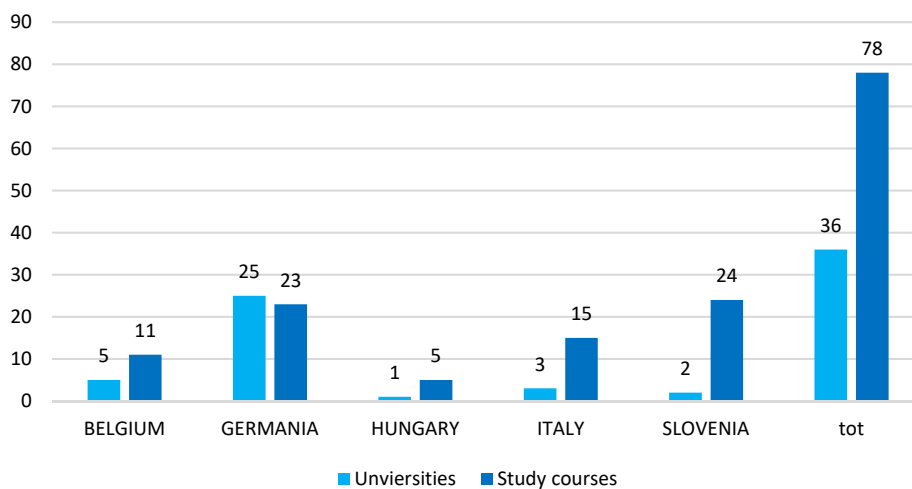
Students involved in the survey



b) Universities (question n. 2) and study courses (question n. 3) of the students involved in the survey

The following diagram shows the total number of Universities and study courses attended by the students involved in the survey.

Number of Universities and Study courses



The following is a breakdown by individual Partnership country of the 36 Universities attended by the survey sample:

BELGIUM	
1	Université catholique de Louvain (UCL)
2	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL)
3	ICHEC Brussels Management School
4	Solvay Brussels School
5	Harvard University
HUNGARY	
1	Corvinus University of Budapest
GERMANY	
1	Europäische Fachhochschule Brühl
2	Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen
3	University of Twente
4	Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen/Nürnberg
5	University of Cologne
6	Universität Mannheim
7	University Passau
8	University Koblenz-Landau
9	DHBW Mosbach
10	RWTH Aachen University
11	Macromedia Highschool
12	University Bayreuth
13	University Freiburg
14	Pforzheim University of Applied Sciences
15	Hochschule Karlsruhe
16	Technische Hochschule Ingolstadt
17	Hochschule Pforzheim
18	WWU Münster
19	LMU Munich
20	TU Munich
21	TH Nürnberg
22	University of Applied Sciences Ludwigshafen am Rhein
23	Hochschule Bochum
24	Ruhr-Universität Bochum
25	KU Eichstätt-Ingolstadt
ITALY	
1	Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore
2	Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza"
3	Università degli Studi di Napoli "Parthenope"
SLOVENIA	
1	University of Ljubljana
2	University of Maribor

With reference to the types of university or post-graduate courses attended by the students involved in the survey, we would like to point out that while in Belgium, Italy and Hungary the survey questionnaire was mainly administered to students of study courses related to business areas, in the other countries the survey was extended to other areas of study, with a view to ensuring adequate coverage of the sample.

c) Students' business experience (question n. 4)

This question aimed to identify, from a quantitative point of view, the involvement (current, past, prospective) of the students in the following types of work experience:

- internships within university courses (dual system)
- business projects at a company (carried out, for example, as part of a university course)
- short-term or temporary youth work activities, such as summer work, youth camps, etc.
- work activities in the context of a family business
- corporate internships/trainee programs
- establishing and running one's own business.

The outcomes of the two types of data analysis are shown below, i.e. of a comparative nature, based on the comparison of the national reports prepared for each partner country, and the overall one, aimed at providing an overview of the level of work experience of the 363 Belgian, Hungarian, German, Italian and Slovenian students involved in the survey.

From the comparative analysis of the options most selected by the students of all partnership countries quite similar results emerge for Belgium, Italy and Slovenia, whose students show a lack of work experience, declaring, on average, that they have never been involved in any of the activities foreseen by the question, respectively in 42% (BE – 4.6 students out of 11), in 49% (IT – 19.6 students out of 40) and in 63% (SI – 51.4 students out of 82) of cases. The only exceptions for Italy are the participation in corporate internship/trainee program in which 15 out of 40 students said they had been involved in the past (38%), and for Belgium and Slovenia participation in the past in activities short-term/temporary work (such as summer work, youth camps, etc.), respectively carried out by 64% of the Belgian student sample (7 out of 11) and 44% of the Slovenian student sample (36 out of 82). From a broader analysis of the results that emerged from the individual national surveys – that is not limited only to the highest percentages recorded for each activity – it emerges that the work activities carried out in the past by the students of all Partnership countries are precisely short-term /temporary activities (IT – 40%, DE – 34%, HU – 41%) and corporate internship/trainee program (BE – 36%, DE – 34%, HU – 29%, SI – 44%).

Another common element to almost all partnership countries is represented by very low percentages in relation to the current and prospective involvement of students in the various activities envisaged by the question, with the exception of the Hungarian case which presents the most conflicting results compared to the others. In particular, as many as 59% of Hungarian students (113 out of 192) declared they wanted to start their own business in the near future, compared to the following percentages in other countries: IT – 13% (5 out of 40); DE – 21% (8 out of 38); SI – 22% (18 out of 82); BE – 36% (4 out of 11).

The following table, instead, provides a synoptic overview of the answers provided by the entire survey sample, highlighting in the coloured boxes the options that obtained the highest number of answers for each type of activity foreseen in the question. In this regard, however, we would like to point out that the "not involved" column refers to the answers of the Belgian, Italian and Slovenian students whose questionnaires explicitly foresaw this option (not covered by the German and Hungarian questionnaires).

Type of business activities	involved in the past	involved in now	plan to be involved in near future	not involved
Participation in a dual training system (formal university-company cooperation for a degree)	46	26	33	76
Participation in a short business project at a company (projects within a university course or with a student organisation)	98	39	72	60
Short term or temporary youth employment (e.g. summer work, employment in youth camps etc.)	155	48	35	48
Participation in the activities of own family business	58	40	34	86
Participation in a corporate internship/trainee program	104	61	78	73
Establishing and running your own business	16	25	148	79

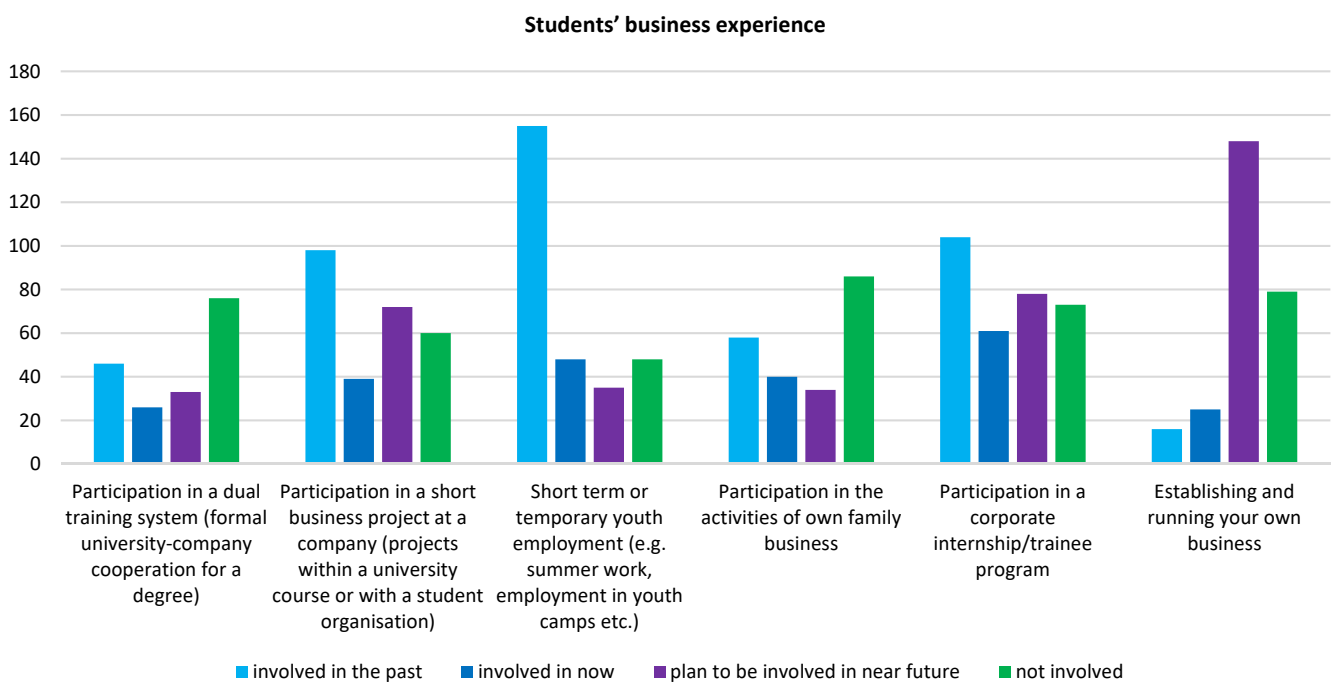
From the overall analysis of the answers gathered, it emerges that:

- 21% and 23% of the students, respectively, have never participated in internships in university courses (dual systems) and in work activities within their family business
- 42% of students in the past has taken part in short-term/temporary work activities, such as summer work, work camps, etc.
- 27% and 29% of students respectively participated in business projects in a company (carried out, for example, within a university course) and in corporate internships/company training programs.

As regards the latter type of activity, please note that the other options proposed have also been selected in similar percentages and, in particular, the total number of students who have been, are or are willing to participate in corporate internships/company training programs is the highest of all the activities proposed by the question, reaching a percentage of 67%.

- if only 7% of the students involved in the survey (25 out of 363) have already started their own business, 40% intend to start one in the near future. In this regard, however, please bear in mind that the high percentage in question is mainly due to the results of the Hungarian questionnaire, which account for 90% of the overall figure (133 out of a total of 148 Hungarian students selected the option) and does not allow, therefore, to estimate a probable interest in starting up business ventures by the entire survey sample (except, obviously, for the Hungarian one)

These overall results are shown below in graphic form:



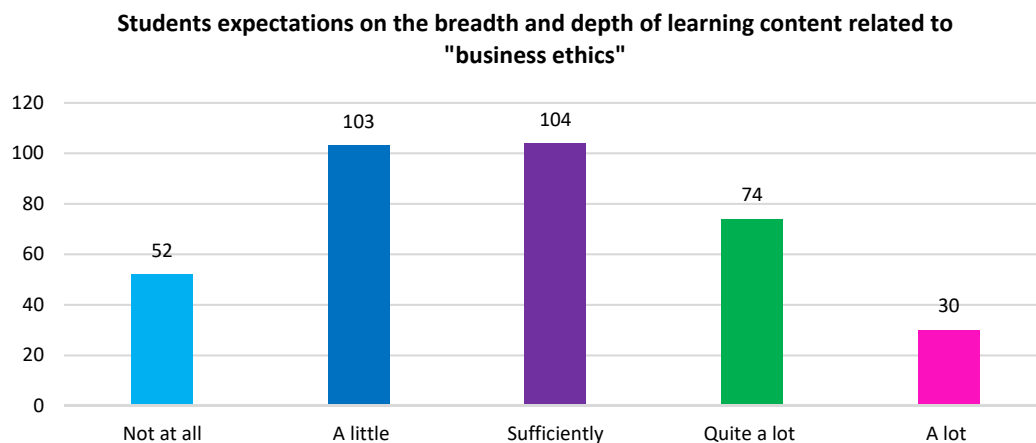
“Business ethics” Section of the questionnaire

a) Breadth and depth of learning contents relating to the theme of “business ethics” (question n. 5)

The following table provides a summary of what students consider to be wide and structured learning contents related to business ethics with respect to their expectations, highlighting the results that emerged from individual national surveys. In general, in all partnership countries the evaluation of the students did not exceed the central parameter of the scale foreseen by the question (“sufficiently”) and, in particular, the Slovenian and German students considered the training offer on business ethics respectively, poor and not at all adequate as regards their expectations.

<i>In relation to the university/training body education program you are studying, do you believe that the breadth and depth of learning content related to the issue of business ethics meets your expectations?</i>						
	Not at all	A little	Sufficiently	Quite a lot	A lot	Total
BELGIUM	3	3	4	1	0	11
GERMANY	2	14	9	10	3	38
HUNGARY	14	52	66	43	17	192
ITALY	2	6	16	9	7	40
SLOVENIA	31	28	9	11	3	82

There prevails, even at overall level, a sufficient alignment between students’ expectations and training offer on the subject of business ethics (29% – 104 of 363), which is largely satisfied in only 8% of cases (30 students out of 363). However, as shown better in the following graph, the highest percentage – obtained by aggregating data from all countries – differs from only one point from the number of students who consider the breadth and depth of learning contents on business ethics as hardly responding to their expectations, highlighting a general need to improve the training offer on the topic.



b) Students’ perspective of attention/importance paid by the Universities/training bodies to business ethics issues (question n. 6)

The following table shows the students’ perception of the importance given by their training program to a set of 10 themes related to business ethics, for each of which they indicated the level of priority according to the following scale: 1 = not important; 2 = not very important; 3 = sufficiently important; 4 = important enough; 5 = very important.

As shown in the following table, which shows the overall results of the 5 surveys, according to the students involved, the respective training programs do not pay a high level of attention/importance to any of the issues related to business ethics proposed in the question. This overall figure is consistent with the results of the individual national surveys in which level “5” was only awarded by Slovenian students solely to the theme of the

“Philosophical theories”. The results of the Slovenian survey, moreover, are those that differ most from the results of the other surveys: in Slovenia, in fact, the students mainly attributed level “1” to almost all the proposed topics, while in the other Partnership countries students’ answers are diversely distributed among the different levels of the evaluation scale.

On an overall level, among the topics that are considered “quite important” in the training offer, only the following are noted:

- CSR
- Stakeholder engagement
- Labour relations.

Instead, sufficient importance is given to the topics “Ethics and market” and “Auditing and external auditing tools”.

Finally, in general, in all partner countries, university training offer does not take into account the following topics, which were assigned levels of importance of “2” and “1”:

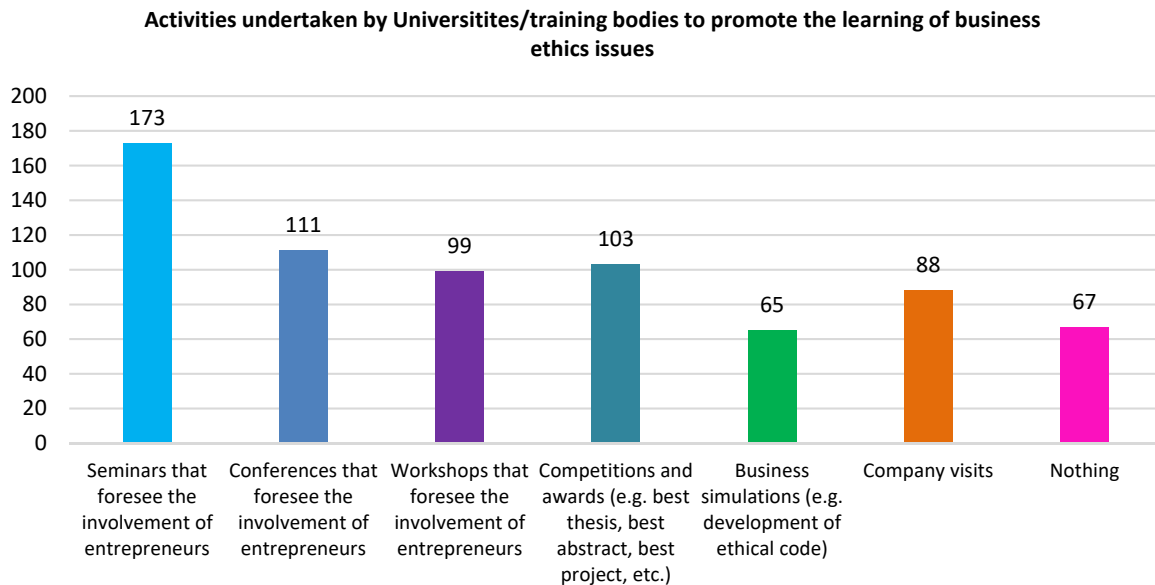
- Tools and contents of business ethics (code of ethics, values) – (level 2)
- Logics and forms of social reporting – (level 2)
- Ethical, social or environmental certification (e.g. AA1000, EMAS, SA 8000, ISO 14000) – (level 1)
- Spiritual beliefs – (level 1)
- Philosophical theories – (level 1)

Themes correlated to business ethics	Level of importance					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Tools and contents of business ethics (code of ethics, values)	62	111	91	64	35	363
CSR	59	63	77	112	52	363
Ethical, social or environmental Certifications (e.g. AA1000, EMAS, SA 8000, ISO 14000)	138	92	66	43	24	363
Stakeholder engagement	53	56	90	95	69	363
Labour relations	41	56	80	117	69	363
Ethics and market	65	81	101	71	45	363
Logics and forms of social reporting (e.g. Social report, environmental report, Annual Report, gender budgeting, sustainability report, etc.).	84	100	93	47	39	363
Auditing and external auditing tools	92	88	98	52	33	363
Spiritual beliefs	183	80	50	13	37	363
Philosophical theories	99	91	90	30	53	363

c) Activities that the Universities/training bodies undertake to promote the learning of business ethics issues (question n. 7)

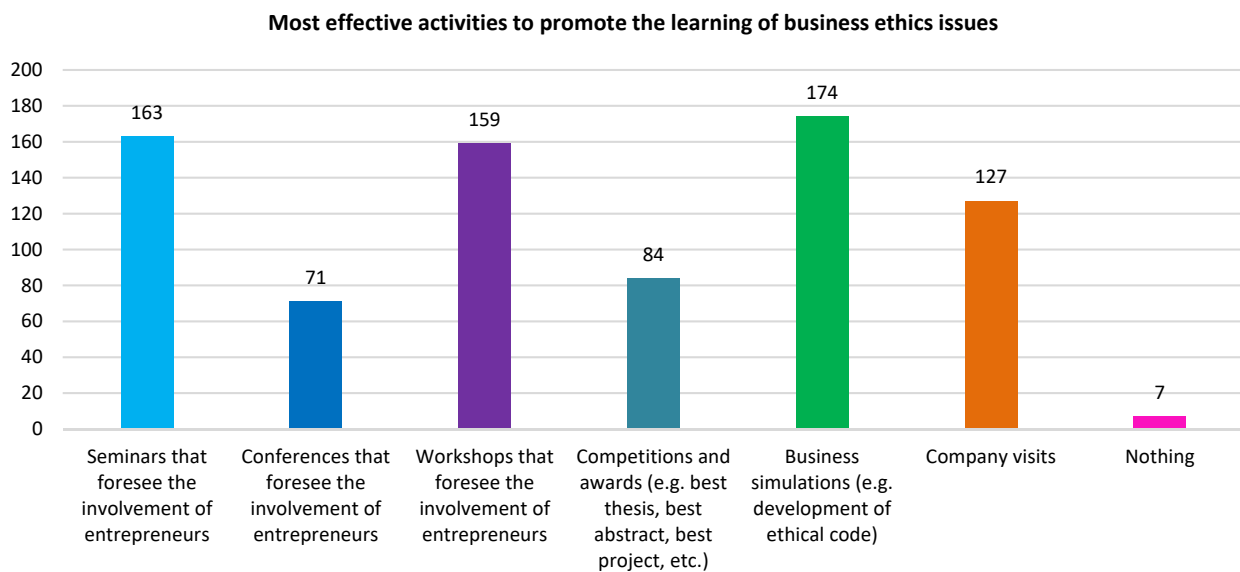
The following graph shows the activities carried out by the universities/training institutions attended by the students involved in the national surveys to encourage the learning of issues related to business ethics. The graph shows a clear prevalence of “Seminars that foresee the involvement of entrepreneurs”, an activity that is also indicated as successful in the results of the Italian, German and Hungarian surveys, followed by “Conferences that foresee the involvement of entrepreneurs” (in first place in the Belgian survey), and by “Competitions and awards (e.g. best thesis, best abstract, best project, etc.)” (which, on the other hand, obtained the highest number of votes in the Slovenian survey, followed by “Seminars” and “Conferences”). Beyond “Workshops”, in general, learning methodologies that involve forms of active and direct participation of students, such as “Business

simulations” and “Company visits”, are less frequent, while in 18% of cases universities/training institutions do not carry out any activity to promote the learning of issues related to business ethics.



d) Activities that the Universities/training bodies undertake to promote the learning of business ethics issues (question n. 8)

The following chart, instead, highlights the activities that students consider most effective, from a methodological point of view, to encourage the learning of issues related to business ethics. The graph shows a preference for “Business simulations” and “Seminars that foresee the involvement of entrepreneurs” followed by “Workshops” and “Company visits”. Also in this case, however, the overall results of the survey are strongly influenced by the results of the Hungarian survey, in which “Seminars” were selected in 120 cases, making it the most effective activity among those proposed, followed by “Business simulations” with 99 votes.



e) Students’ perception concerning the notion of “business ethics” (question n. 9)

The following table shows the students’ perception of the concept of “business ethics” referring to a set of 13 aspects, of which a maximum of 5 could be selected, based on the importance they attributed to them. For each of the 5 selected items, the students also indicated the priority level based on the following scale: 1 = not important; 2 = not very important; 3 = sufficiently important; 4 = quite important; 5 = very important.

The table shows that the group of students involved in the survey selected all the aspects proposed, generally assigning levels of importance of between 3 and 5 (highlighted in blue).

Specifically, on average, 49% of the students involved in the partnership countries consider the following aspects of business ethics as fundamental, giving them a level of importance of “5”:

- Following ethical principles (61%, that represents in all the most selected option)
- Taking responsibility for employees (50%)
- Paying taxes (47%)
- Complying with legislation in the field of environmental protection, health and safety of workers (44%)
- Having a positive social and environmental impact when doing business (42%)
- Providing products and services that truly meet needs of people (38%).

The following aspects obtained a level of importance equal to “4”, obtaining an average preference of 32%:

- Implementing quality management and ensuring high product and service standards
- Contributing to the solution of social problems
- Taking into consideration the needs of all stakeholders

Finally, the following aspects obtained, with an average of 25%, the following aspects of importance of “3”:

- Voluntary social engagement to increase market shares and profits
- Supporting charitable organizations
- Pursuing the interests of company owners
- Acting guided by faith/spirituality, that overall obtained the lowest percentage of all (18%).

Aspects correlated to business ethics	Level of importance				
	1	2	3	4	5
Following ethical principles (like honesty, integrity, fairness etc.)	3	8	20	90	223
Voluntary social engagement to increase market shares and profits (e.g. cause-related marketing)	18	42	102	95	52
Having a positive social and environmental impact when doing business	4	14	38	126	153
Complying with legislation in the field of environmental protection, health and safety of workers	16	8	43	95	159
Implementing quality management and ensuring high product and service standards	11	20	59	123	90
Supporting charitable organizations	22	54	93	72	49
Paying taxes	15	13	50	58	170
Pursuing the interests of company owners	22	43	104	64	36
Providing products and services that truly meet needs of people	7	9	46	90	138
Contributing to the solution of social problems	7	17	47	123	113
Taking responsibility for employees	6	10	24	92	182
Taking into consideration the needs of all stakeholders	9	28	64	107	82
Acting guided by faith/spirituality	51	55	66	65	55

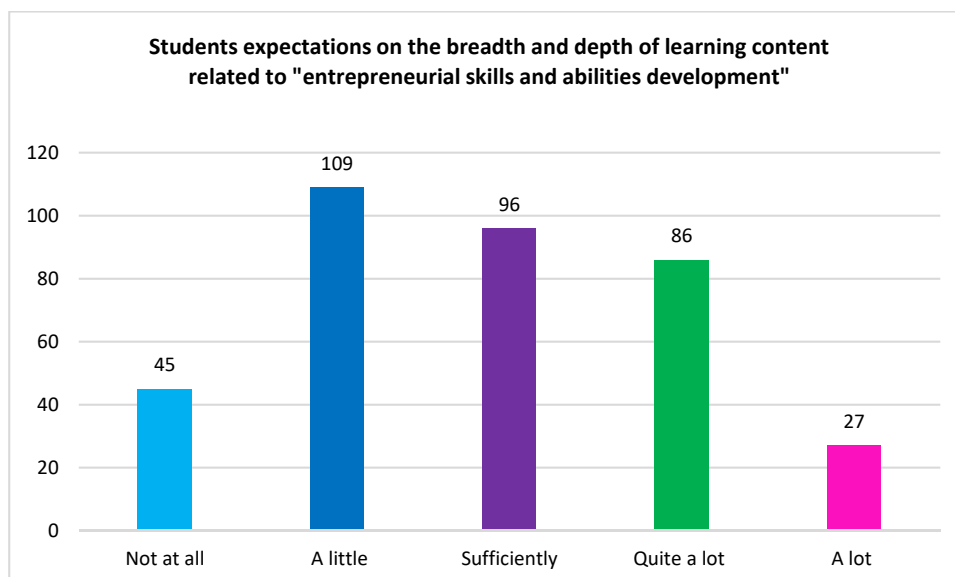
“Entrepreneurial skills” Section of the questionnaire

a) Breadth and depth of learning contents relating to the theme of “entrepreneurial skills and abilities development” (question n. 10)

The following table provides a summary of what students consider to be wide and structured learning contents relating to the theme of “development of skills and entrepreneurial skills” with respect to their expectations, highlighting the results emerging from the individual national surveys. Outside of the Hungarian students, whose expectations are adequately met (level 4), the assessment of Belgian and Italian students stands at the central parameter of the scale foreseen by the question (“sufficiently”), while that of the German and Slovenian students is scarcely adequate with respect to expectations.

<i>In relation to the University/training body where you are studying, do you think that the breadth and depth of learning content related to the “development of entrepreneurial skills and abilities” meets your expectations?</i>						
	Not at all	A little	Sufficiently	Quite a lot	A lot	Total
BELGIUM	1	3	4	3	0	11
GERMANY	4	14	11	4	5	38
HUNGARY	13	56	46	66	11	192
ITALY	5	6	18	9	2	40
SLOVENIA	22	30	17	4	9	82

Overall, there is little alignment between students’ expectations and the training supplied on the theme of “development of skills and entrepreneurial skills” (30% – 109 out of 363). This result does not differ significantly from the average level (“sufficiently” – equal to 26%), nor from the high level (“quite a lot” – equal to 24%) of the evaluation scale. The latter figure, however, is strongly influenced by the results of the Hungarian survey, which accounts for 77% of the overall percentage (66 out of 86 responses are, in fact, from Hungarian students). In light of this analysis, therefore, there is a general need to enhance the training offer on the topic which, outside the Hungarian case, is not particularly adequate with respect to students’ expectations.



b) Students’ perspective of attention/importance paid by the Universities/training bodies to hard entrepreneurial skills (question n. 11)

The following table shows the students’ perception of the level of attention/importance – expressed on a scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important) – placed by universities/training institutions to a set of 5 entrepreneurial hard skills, defined on the basis of the **Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (EntreComp)** recently developed by the Joint Research Center of the European Commission.

The students’ answers highlight a level of attention/importance of between 3–4, expressed on average by 32% of the students involved, which is consistent with the results of the individual national surveys.

Entrepreneurial hard skill	Level of importance					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
evaluate opportunities – ability to analyse the context, identify and seize opportunities to create value	28	48	94	120	73	363
ethical and sustainable thinking – ability to assess the consequences and impact of business initiatives on the market, society and the environment, as well as the long-term sustainability of set objectives	35	74	114	86	54	363
mobilising resources – ability to collect and manage material, immaterial and digital resources to transform ideas into action	44	48	131	92	48	363
planning and management – ability to apply project management principles to set priorities, organize and manage activities, as well as draw up a business plan based on a business model	26	50	78	120	89	363
apply economic and financial know-how – ability to draft a budget for economic activity, identify and find public and private funding sources, understand the logics of taxation	43	43	98	100	79	363

c) Students’ perspective of attention/importance paid by the Universities/training bodies to soft entrepreneurial skills (question n. 12)

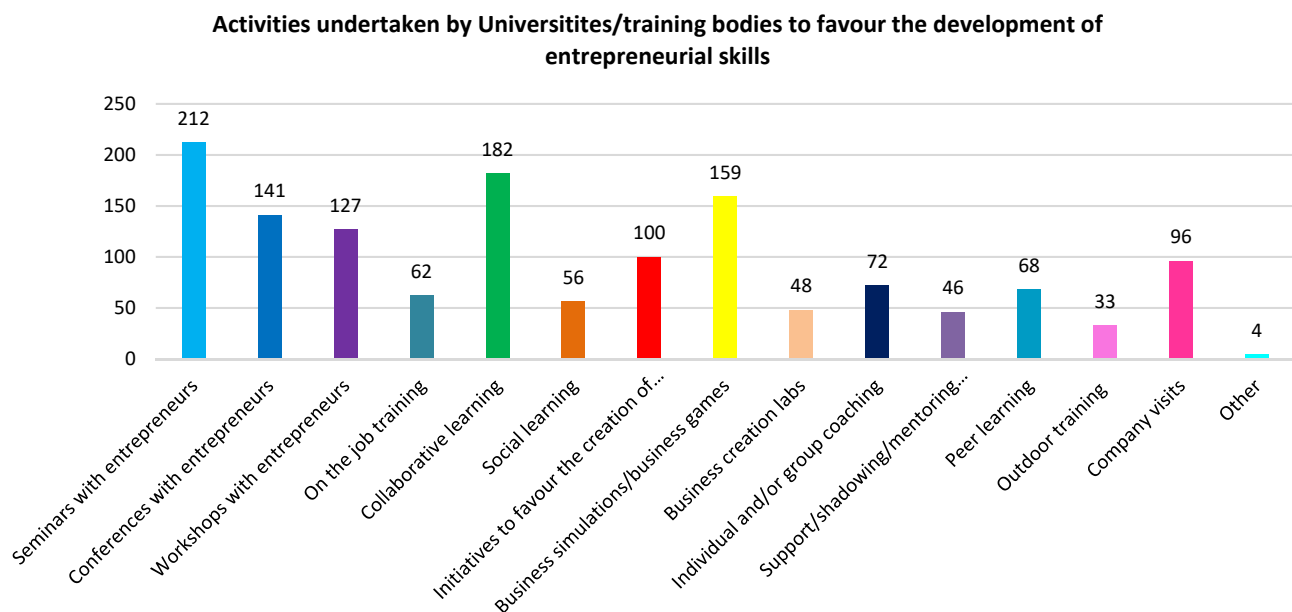
The following table shows the students’ perception of the level of attention/importance – expressed on a scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important) – placed by universities/training institutions to a set of 7 entrepreneurial soft skills, also defined on the basis of the **Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (EntreComp)**.

With the exception of the “Working with others” skill that receives a high level of attention (“5”), in partner country University courses (38%), in relation to all the other skills, also in this case, the responses of the students highlight a level of attention/importance included in the 3–4 range, expressed on average by 30% of the students involved, which is consistent with the results of the individual national surveys, outside the Belgian one, in which “Creativity” and “Mobilizing others”, in particular, have achieved level “2”.

Entrepreneurial soft skill	Level of importance					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
creativity – ability to develop ideas that create value by identifying and solving problems by experimenting with innovative approaches	33	60	86	116	68	363
self-awareness and self-efficacy – ability to identify both personal and group strengths and weaknesses, believing in one’s ability to improve	15	58	104	109	77	363
motivation and persistence – the ability to be focused and determined to achieve one’s objectives and vision, to work under pressure and in adverse situations without giving up	33	53	98	105	74	363
mobilising others – ability to inspire, encourage and engage relevant stakeholders, demonstrating effective communication, leadership and negotiating skills	37	63	100	105	58	363
taking initiative – ability to start value creation processes independently, accepting challenges and working to achieve targets	28	71	113	102	49	363
dealing with uncertainties, ambiguities and risks – ability to make decisions, demonstrating readiness and flexibility in uncertain scenarios, characterized by partial information and/or risky results	34	61	113	107	48	363
working with others – ability to create a group and collaborate with others to develop ideas and turn them into action, to resolve conflicts and to network	14	32	83	97	137	363

d) Activities that the Universities/training bodies undertake to favour the development of entrepreneurial skills (question n. 13)

The following chart shows that the universities/training institutions attended by the students involved in the survey undertake all the activities foreseen by the question to favour the development of entrepreneurial skills. In particular, as in the case of question 7, the results of the survey show a clear prevalence of “Seminars that foresee the involvement of entrepreneurs” (58%), followed by “Collaborative learning” activities (50%) and “Business simulations/Business games” (44%). Beyond “Seminars”, “Workshops that foresee the involvement of entrepreneurs” and “Initiatives to favour the creation of entrepreneurial ideas (e.g. start-up weekends, competitions on” start-up pitches”, project work, awards, etc.)”, equal to 39%, 35% and 28% respectively, all the other activities, on the other hand, reach an average of 15% and represent marginal solutions to favour the development of entrepreneurial skills.



e) Activities that the students consider as the most effective to favour the development of entrepreneurial skills (question n. 14)

The following chart provides evidence of both the activities that, in general, the students consider more suitable to favour the development of entrepreneurial skills (see the item “tot” in the graph), and of what they consider effective, pleasant and/or significant. In particular, “Workshops with entrepreneurs”, “On the job training”, “Business simulations/business games”, “Seminars with entrepreneurs” and “Initiatives to favour the creation of entrepreneurial ideas”, are all activities that reach over 50% of preferences of all the students involved. Aside from “Business simulations/business games” which, according to the students are, by far, the most pleasant activities, together with “Peer learning”, “Outdoor training” and “Company visits”, all the other activities proposed in the survey, including those that exceed 50% of the preferences, have been considered as “significant” to favour the development of entrepreneurial skills.

Activities to favour the development of entrepreneurial skills (Students' perspectives)

