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STRENGTHENING APPRENTICE ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP

2022-1-TR01-KA220-VET-000085298



ANKARA
İL MİLLÎ EĞİTİM MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

Introduction

Müteşebbis Gelişim Vakfı (MESVAK), established in 1999 with the goal of fostering entrepreneurship, developing professionals, and supporting local and regional economic development through vocational education (website: www.mesvak.org), in collaboration with the Ministry of National Education, completed one of its initiatives, the "Empowerment of Apprentices in Entrepreneurship Project," as part of a cooperation protocol signed in 2020. The executive of MESVAK, along with the Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education, the CEFE Macedonia from North Macedonia, and Võrumaa Arenduskeskus from Estonia, are pleased to announce the completion of the project "Empowerment of Apprentices in Entrepreneurship" (Project No. 2022-1-TR01-KA220-VET-000085298), supported by the Turkish National Agency under the EU Erasmus+ Program. We are delighted that OSTİM Industrial Zone, through OSTİM Technical University (OSTİMtech), has hosted the public information sharing meeting at the conclusion of this project, which aligns with the university's goals, adding significant meaning and value to our efforts.

As of today, Turkey has 376 Vocational Training Centers (formerly known as apprentice schools), with 8,714 teachers, 2,432 classrooms, providing education to 421,930 students in various vocational fields. Additionally, 1,923 Vocational and Technical Anatolian High Schools are implementing the Vocational Training Center Program. Briefly, Turkey has developed an inclusive system where students receive practical training at workplaces five days a week and theoretical education at school one day a week. The apprenticeship education system in the Turkish education system has a historical background that spans centuries, incorporating theoretical, practical, and ethical education known as "Ahilik," which treats working and owning a profession as acts of worship.

Today, industrialists, business people, and sector representatives face challenges in finding employees who can work diligently and competently. According to job and employment analysis reports, "Industrialists cannot find machine operators and welders, contractors cannot find plasterers and painters, tourism businesses cannot find waiters, tailors and carpenters cannot find apprentices... Employers report working at reduced capacity due to the unavailability of skilled workers." In 2024, a study conducted across 41 countries, including Turkey, highlighted an average talent shortage reported by executives at 75%, with Turkey experiencing a higher need for skilled workers at 76%, above the average. The gap for skilled intermediate staff has begun to adversely affect production and industrial development, including in European Union countries.

In such a needy environment for professional skills, we thank the MESVAK family, who designed, wrote, monitored, and passionately supported the Strong Apprentice Project, our partners including the Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education, valuable project teams from Estonia and Macedonia, officials from the EU Erasmus Program, and the Turkish National Agency for their support at every level.

Nurettin Konaklı
Chairman of MESVAK

Information About the Project

The project titled "Strengthening Apprentices on Entrepreneurship" is an initiative under the Erasmus+ Cooperation Partnerships in Vocational Education and Training. Managed by the Mütteşebbis Gelişim Vakfı (MESVAK), the project seeks to infuse entrepreneurial skills into the vocational education and training (VET) sector. The main goal is to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset among apprentices and equip them with the necessary tools to initiate and manage their own ventures successfully. The initiative also has four partners besides MESVAK; CEFE Macedonia, Võrumaa Arenduskeskus from Estonia, and Ankara Provincial Directorate for National Education from Turkey.

This initiative kicked off with a series of preparatory meetings and presentations to ensure all partners fully understood the project objectives and could begin work on a shared foundation. The project activities include the development of educational modules that focus on entrepreneurial skills, the creation and implementation of e-learning modules for flexible learning, and the establishment of an Entrepreneurship Scale for Apprentices, designed to assess the impact of the training provided.

A significant aspect of this project is its international collaboration, involving multiple partners from different countries. This network enriches the project by bringing a variety of perspectives and expertise, enhancing the development and delivery of training modules. Each partner contributes different values to the project, from curricular development to e-learning strategies, which collectively contribute to a robust program tailored to foster essential business skills.

As the project progresses, various meetings and training sessions have been held in different countries to review progress, share best practices, and refine the modules and training approaches based on feedback and evolving needs. Additionally, the project involves visits to vocational institutions and engagements with educational experts to ensure that the training remains relevant and practical.

The primary beneficiaries of this project are apprentices who receive training that not only enhances their vocational skills but also equips them with entrepreneurial knowledge, thus increasing their employability and potential for business success. By integrating entrepreneurship into VET, the project aims to enhance the appeal and efficacy of vocational training and create a more dynamic workforce capable of contributing innovatively to the economy.

Overall, the project "Strengthening Apprentices on Entrepreneurship" represents a proactive approach to education, where vocational training meets entrepreneurial innovation, preparing apprentices not just for jobs but for potential roles as business owners and innovators in their respective fields.



Partners of the Project

Müteşebbis Gelişim Vakfı (MESVAK)

The Entrepreneurial Development Foundation (MESVAK) was established on June 24, 1999, with the purpose of nurturing and developing entrepreneurs, aiming to support local and regional development through vocational training. The Foundation has maintained a steady course without deviating from its purpose and operates in its own property today, funded entirely by donations from its members. The Foundation aims to support life and gain material and spiritual profit. It supports entrepreneurs and innovators.

MESVAK conducts educational, cultural, scientific, artistic organizations, research, meetings, and events such as the Week of Ahi Culture, both domestically and internationally. It provides scholarships to researchers and educators involved in these activities. Within the scope of entrepreneurship and vocational training, it organizes training and skill courses. The Foundation has established educational centers for learning Turkish and foreign languages, and provides support to young people who want to learn a profession and become entrepreneurs.

MESVAK also provides occupational health and safety services to business owners and their employees. It offers investment consultancy to those looking to improve their business or start a new one. The Foundation fosters a spirit of cooperation to the extent possible. The foundation aims to nurture entrepreneurs who will embrace the love and development of Turkey, corporate formation, teamwork, contemporary production and management techniques, and who will aim for material and spiritual gains and sharing in a lawful manner.

CEFE Macedonia

It was created in 1980 by the German Ministry of Economy, and spread around the world through the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). CEFE is considered one of the most successful methods for adult learning and business development. In the last 20 years, CEFE trainings have been conducted quite successfully in more than 130 countries in the world through the development of an international network that counts over 10,000 active trainers who have trained more than 20 million people in total.

The basic instruments by which they work are based on the CEFE methodology (in translation: competence-based economies, enterprise formation), which uses an action-oriented approach and simple learning methods in order to develop and strengthen the managerial and personal skills of entrepreneurs in context of increasing incomes, opening new jobs and sustainable economic development.

Võrumaa Arenduskeskus

Võrumaa Arenduskeskus is an organization that operates in Võru county and focuses on regional development and business support. Development centers are county organizations located all over Estonia, the purpose of which is to support regional development and contribute to the promotion of entrepreneurship and economic activity.

The Võrumaa Development Center offers a variety of services and subsidies aimed at both existing entrepreneurs and the creation of new businesses. These services include business consulting, training, promotion of entrepreneurship education, project coordination and other activities that help strengthen the all-round vitality of the region. We support sustainable community initiatives that strengthen the community and open up new opportunities for learning. We also coordinate county-wide educational events and promote the concept of lifelong learning.

Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education

The historical development and structural transformation of the Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education has been shaped alongside the evolution of Turkish educational history. The Ministry of National Education was established on March 17, 1857, under the name of the Ministry of General Education. In 1869, the General Education Regulation laid the foundation for the first provincial organization.

In this context, with the new regulations made by the Provincial Administration Law in 1949, a Provincial Directorate of National Education position was created in every province, and Primary Education Directorates were established in districts. Later, the Provincial Directorates of National Education served under the name of Provincial Directorate of National Education, Youth, and Sports in 1983. The Primary Education Directorates were transformed into District Directorates of National Education in 1985. With the Regulation of the Ministry of National Education for Provincial and District Directorates of National Education, which came into effect after being published in the Official Gazette no. 28471 on November 18, 2012, the duties, authorities, and responsibilities of the Provincial and District Directorates of National Education were once again reorganized. Aware of its responsibilities as the capital, the Ankara Provincial Directorate of National Education serves the Turkish educational cause together with its 25 District Directorates of National Education.

Project Activities

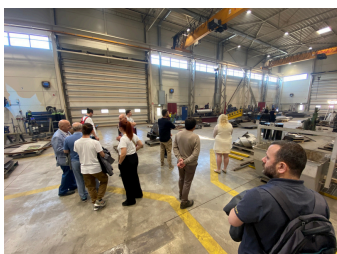
Kick-off Meeting in Macedonia

The kick-off meeting in Macedonia was the initial gathering of all project partners. The purpose of this meeting was to establish clear understanding of the project goals, outline the responsibilities of each partner, and facilitate a collaborative team environment. The meeting involved strategic planning sessions and presentations from each partner to ensure everyone was aligned and committed to the project's success.



Sharing Best Practices Visit in Estonia

This event in Estonia was organized to allow project members to observe and learn from Estonia's advanced vocational education practices. The purpose was to gather insights that could be integrated into the partners' own educational practices. The visit included tours of educational institutions and interactive workshops with Estonian educators, aiming to foster knowledge exchange and improve teaching methods and curriculum development across the board.





Training for Educators in Turkey

In Turkey, a training session for educators was held to provide them with the necessary skills to effectively implement the new curriculum and training modules. This event aimed to enhance the educators' capabilities in delivering innovative teaching methods and using the newly developed materials. It included intensive workshops and practical exercises, focusing on improving the overall quality of vocational training.



SAPE-CAMP with Young Entrepreneurs in Macedonia

The SAPE-CAMP in Macedonia was designed to support young entrepreneurs in refining and developing their business ideas. The camp provided a platform for participants to engage in practical business development activities, receive mentorship, and gain valuable feedback from experienced professionals. This event aimed to foster entrepreneurial skills and encourage innovation among vocational education students.



Project Results

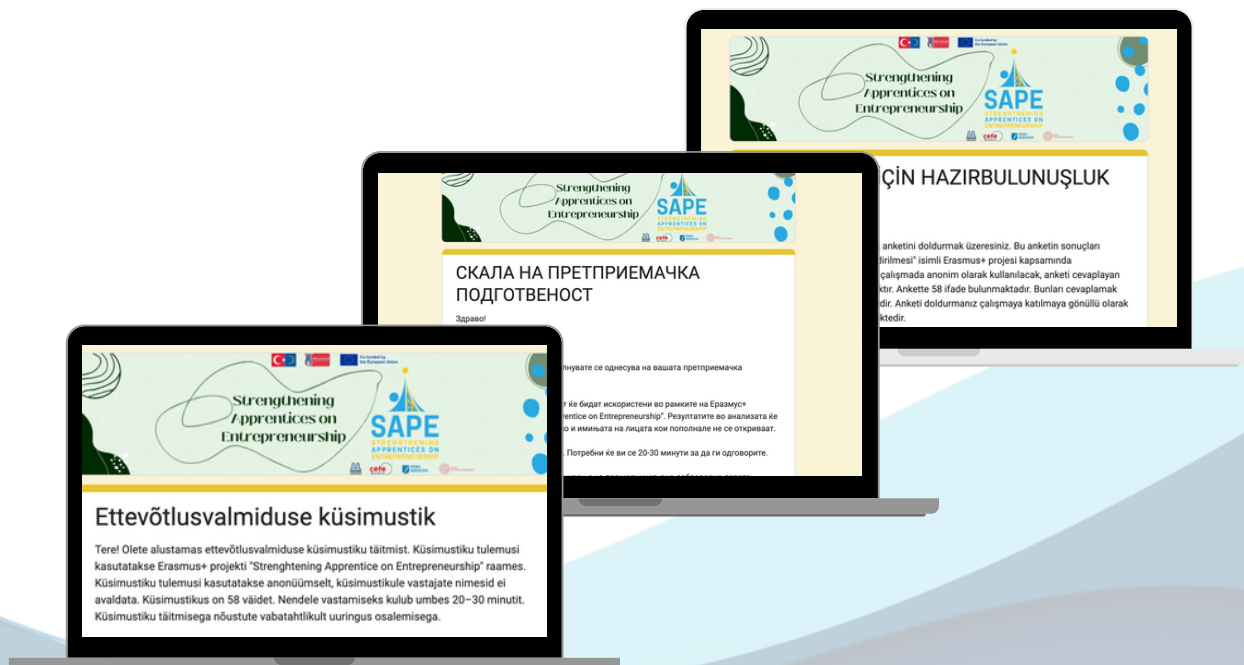
Scale

In the context of the project, the "Scale" was developed as a tool to assess the entrepreneurial readiness and competencies of vocational education and training (VET) students. This scale was designed to provide a standardized measurement of entrepreneurship skills, helping educators and students to gauge the effectiveness of the training provided and identify areas for improvement.

The Scale was intended to support the project's overarching goal of fostering entrepreneurship among VET students. By providing a clear framework for evaluation, the Scale helped educators to tailor their instruction to better meet the needs of their students, focusing on enhancing skills that are critical for successful entrepreneurship, such as leadership, problem-solving, and innovation.

The implementation of the Scale involved creating a set of criteria and benchmarks that defined various levels of entrepreneurial skills. These benchmarks were based on industry standards and educational objectives, ensuring relevance and applicability. The Scale was piloted with a group of students to gather initial feedback, which was then used to refine and adjust the tool to better suit educational contexts.

Once finalized, the Scale served not only as a diagnostic tool to assess initial skill levels but also as a means to track progress over time, providing both students and educators with valuable insights into the development of entrepreneurial capabilities. This tool became an integral part of the project's strategy to embed entrepreneurial thinking into the curriculum and support the professional development of students in the vocational training sector.



E-learning Modules

The e-learning modules developed as a result of the project served as a pivotal enhancement to the educational offerings in vocational education and training (Vets). These online modules were created to provide a flexible and accessible learning platform for VET students, enabling them to access educational content remotely and at their convenience. This approach was particularly beneficial for overcoming geographical and time constraints, making learning opportunities more inclusive and accessible to a broader audience.

Designed to expand the reach of vocational training, the e-learning modules included a variety of interactive elements such as video tutorials, quizzes, simulations, and other engaging content forms. These were crafted by educational experts to ensure that the online learning experience was not only comprehensive but also engaging and effective. The structure of these modules was carefully aligned with the curriculum taught in traditional classroom settings, providing a blended learning experience that supported the overall educational goals of the VET programs.

The content of the e-learning modules covered essential topics relevant to vocational disciplines, incorporating current industry practices and theoretical knowledge to prepare students adequately for the workforce. By integrating these online modules into the vocational training curriculum, the project aimed to enhance the learning process, making it more dynamic and adaptable to the needs of today's learners and labor market demands.



Educators Module

The "Program Curriculum for Entrepreneurship - SAPE VET R2 - Short EntreSkills Program SAPE" was developed as an integral outcome of the Educators Module from the project, aimed at equipping apprentices in vocational education and training (VET) schools with essential entrepreneurial skills. This curriculum was meticulously crafted by Jovan Stalevski, a noted entrepreneurship trainer from CEFE Macedonia, to enable apprentices to transition into competent entrepreneurs through immersive experiential learning.

The main goal of the program is to help apprentices recognize their potential as entrepreneurs and equip them with the necessary skills to establish and run successful ventures. The curriculum focuses on developing their ability to recognize their entrepreneurial capacities, establish a robust network of business contacts, understand key entrepreneurial planning and decision-making principles, comprehend basic market economy functions, assess market share, and prepare a solid business concept that could attract financing or collaborators.

The curriculum spans several modules, each targeting different aspects of entrepreneurship:

1. Opening Activities and Steering the Group initiates the program with icebreakers and activities designed to familiarize participants with each other and the program's objectives, setting a collaborative tone for the sessions ahead.

2. Exploring Entrepreneurial Characteristics dives into personal entrepreneurial characteristics (PECs), risk management, and effective communication strategies, helping participants to refine their negotiation skills and enhance their competitive stance.

3. Finding and Matching Business Idea encourages creative thinking through brainstorming sessions, guiding apprentices in generating and refining viable business ideas that align with both personal interests and market needs.

4. Market and Marketing Plan introduces marketing principles and strategies, involving participants in simulations and practical exercises to apply these concepts effectively.

5. Production and Organization covers the essentials of managing production processes, emphasizing quality and cost management to optimize business operations.

6. Financial Planning focuses on the financial aspects of entrepreneurship, such as investment planning and understanding the financial dynamics crucial for starting and sustaining a business.

7. Business Planning - Reality Check (optional), offers a practical evaluation of business planning processes, allowing participants to assess the viability of their business strategies in real-world scenarios.

The program is designed to be interactive, utilizing a variety of teaching methods including group discussions, presentations, case studies, and hands-on exercises to ensure a comprehensive learning experience. To effectively deliver this program, it requires a well-equipped training room, internet connectivity, and skilled facilitators to guide the learning process.

Overall, this curriculum serves as a foundation for apprentices to develop the entrepreneurial thinking and skills necessary to navigate the challenges of starting and managing a business, embodying the project's commitment to fostering self-sufficiency and innovation in vocational education.

