



# Students Entrepreneurship in Greece

Nikolaos Karanassios  
TEI of Serres  
Entrepreneurship Responsible  
Assistant Professor

## Introduction

All European Directives to the policy makers and much of the European money are concentrated in fostering entrepreneurship. ESF and ERDF devote a good part in financing projects that are expected to increase the number of business creation, thus wealth and jobs.

The policies are concentrated in Entrepreneurial education, on one hand, aiming to change the current European citizens mindset, and on the other hand to increase innovation and competitiveness of the enterprises, by motivating both the enterprises and the Universities, to transform research into commercial products or business methods.

The procedure of changing the mindset, is a long one and all parties involved, admit that we have to wait for many years, until we will see the results and evaluate the effectiveness of the means.

In both cases, education and liaison of business with the Universities, the initial hypotheses have to be criticized, so that, in view of the next Support Framework, the IV, may take them into consideration.

## The international contest

It is common in all cases of policy making or project ideas generating sessions, to commence with what we call “the common sense”. This may be described in the following general lines:

- Innovation is a result of business ideas, spontaneous to the researchers that discover a new scientific item that may become a product, a production or business method. Since most of the research is being done in Universities, innovation is expected to be born there.
- Young persons need financial support in order to transform their innovation or entrepreneurial inclination, into a viable enterprise.
- Entrepreneurship is, well a mindset, but also a set of knowledge and skills, that is or may become an educational subject, if not a new discipline.
- Students and young researchers alike need support and guidance in order to prepare a successful business plan; the more the persons supporting them have Academic credentials, the more suitable they are.

Changing the mentality of the prospective entrepreneurs, in the sense of the profiles of the persons that more frequently become entrepreneurs, is a task oriented to the psychological aspect of the intervention.

The creation of enterprises is a result of a mix of supporting policies and the economic-business environment.

There is a series of observations that are putting in doubt these fundamental presumptions.

Starting from the last, it is amazing that the socio-economic environment is showing contradictory evidences. For example, the highest rate of business creation is being awarded, for the past five years, to Uganda, exceeding any other economy, Japan is

not at the place we expect, USA is doubling the rate of Europe, but still does not figure in the first places.

An explanation is that we should distinguish entrepreneurship between the one which is driven by necessity and another from opportunity. The more an economy is "developed" the less enterprises are being created by necessity, while in less developed markets, creating a business is the only way to make a living.

Business ideas are deriving mainly from the entrepreneurs rather than researchers. Researchers are trying to make their findings public, because their Academic career depends on their publications, while entrepreneurs keep their ideas "top secret" fearing that competitors would copy them without the cost that they had to pay for it.

Entrepreneurship is not a mental distortion, while the lack of it, is not either. It is not an ethical, ideological or political issue. It is a natural inclination of people to get a legitimate return on their investment on "brain-storming", risk taking (money or time and effort devoted, makes no difference) and knowledge and skills acquisition.

The perspective view of the global environment

Young entrepreneurship is a personal vocation, with a potential, when:

- There is a personal commitment, yes, aiming to become rich, why not?
- The potential entrepreneur relays his ambition on the relative knowledge and skills, which are in his demonstrable possession.
- He has experimentally tried to prepare and document a business plan.
- He is professionally guided to the market and public administration hints.
- He has an experience of international networks, while networking has to be considered as one of the fundamental pillars of successful business.
- He receives a professional assistance from organizations that relay on rather the business than the public administration or Academic world.
- He is ready to present a scientific documentation of the feasibility of both his proposal concerning the product and/or production / business procedure of his idea, as well as his business plan.

Money is a secondary issue. If the idea, the preparation and the documentation are adequate, the capital to contribute can be found, from whoever has the money and expects to increase his wealth from merely choosing where to invest, calculating the ratio between risk and expected earnings.

Doing business in the global economic environment, is relative to the ability to participate in global networks.

There is a strong dispute among scientists and professionals about the question if Entrepreneurship can be taught, seen as new science and what is the best profile of the tutor / mentor.

The first part of the question has a surprising support by the members of Academia, who are, in their majority, against a new science and the incorporation of Entrepreneurship lessons in the Curricula. Most Academics, including those who are the specialists in this field, find the idea of teaching entrepreneurship contradictory with the main business topic which is creativity and diversification. On the other hand, most professionals would like to see a new scientific sector, the one of entrepreneurship, with specific research, structural education and formal accreditation.

Business persons have a different point of view; they are reluctant to the idea of entrepreneurial education, but they connect entrepreneurship with professionalism, like business ethics, market functions and communication skills. The idea of internship of the participants of entrepreneurship preparation, is rather dropped. Internship may be accepted by the businesses if and when it is connected with the final dissertation, the professors are deeply involved in the dissertation preparation and they guide the trainees, in a way that their enterprises obtain a benefit, such as the contact with research and researchers, transformable into profitable ventures.

## Conclusions

Young people, students and graduates, hesitate to think profit wise.

Educational system is thinking disciplinary wise.

Business persons are exploitation wise oriented.

Research involvement, is Academic rank attracted.

This manifold influenced equilibrium, may be described as:

Would be entrepreneurs are people that decided to commit themselves in such a personal goal.

They have acquired the respective skills and knowledge.

They have been prepared to compile a business plan.

They have been guided by professionals.

They take part in thematic international networks