

Preface by the European Commission

Higher education in Europe is changing, and this book, based on a study supported by the European Commission, documents and analyses some of the main developments. As European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, I am pleased to support its publication.

The subject of the book is timely and its insights are telling. Entrepreneurship education in higher education is becoming more commonplace across Europe; however, progress varies widely, between Member States, between regions and between individual universities and colleges.

This book shows that while adequate funding is essential for the effective integration of entrepreneurship education into higher education, the most important underlying factor is the interest and commitment of institutional leaders. Curriculum quality is critical, but so is the quality of extracurricular activities. We can also conclude that entrepreneurship education is being delivered effectively, not only by top-ranked institutions but also by others that are less well known.

I firmly believe that there is no single ‘best model’ for the delivery of entrepreneurship education. All higher education institutions are faced with the challenge of becoming more entrepreneurial—both in the type of education provided to their students and in how they support communities. This study shows that every higher education institution must find its own ways of becoming entrepreneurial—a very important lesson for EU policymakers, given the rich diversity of contexts, cultures and traditions across Europe.

The lessons of this project help to strengthen the evidence base around the entrepreneurial potential of higher education. I will ensure that the study’s insights feed into the policy guidance that the European Commission provides in support of Member States.

The timing of this publication could not be better. 2017 is a key year for us. We are celebrating the 30th anniversary of one of the EU’s most successful programmes—Erasmus+. We are also launching our renewed modernisation agenda for higher education as well as our review of the framework for key competences—the set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help learners

find fulfilment and work and to take part in society. One of my key policy priorities for European cooperation in education is to open up, support and encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in education and training. We will look in particular at how we can strengthen education for entrepreneurial competence, and the findings presented here make an important contribution to the discussion.

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