

SMALL BUSINESS ACT FOR EUROPE

GUIDELINES FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT IN THE PRE-ACCESSION REGION (2015)

**DIMENSION 1: EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR
ENTREPRENEURSHIP & WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

DIMENSION 8: SME SKILLS

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Introduction

1. Context

The EU's 2020 policy agenda sees a reinforced commitment to building more competitive economies able to create sustainable jobs across the 28 member countries. The renewed policy drive gives particular attention to entrepreneurship promotion for young people and women in the bid to promote productivity and employment in Europe's national economies. Through their commitment to EU policy alignment, the countries of the EU's pre-accession region have engaged in a policy monitoring and improvement drive (SEE2020) that directly mirrors the EU2020 commitments. The Small Business Act for Europe (SBA)¹, along with its monitoring, assessment and reporting tools forms an integral part of the EU's support to the SEE2020 developments.

Dimension 1 of the SBA particularly focuses on building an enabling environment to promote entrepreneurship. In the pre-accession region, specific attention is given to building policy frameworks and support systems to promote entrepreneurship across all levels of education. Particular attention is given to fostering entrepreneurship as a key competence that is an integral part of wider EU education policy.² How entrepreneurship is promoted outside the formal education system (e.g. in education and training courses not subject to formal qualifications) is also important. For ease of reference, the SBA refers to entrepreneurial learning. This covers all forms of education and training, both formal and non-formal, including work-based learning that contribute to entrepreneurial spirit and activity (business start-ups) with or without a commercial objective.

A second feature of Dimension 1 of the SBA is women's entrepreneurship. Women's entrepreneurship is not a gender issue but an economic issue and training support for existing and budding women entrepreneurs will be important in the EU's wider bid for competitiveness and growth. Women's contribution to Europe's economy is now a key plank of EU enterprise policy. Through the SBA policy alignment process, EU pre-accession countries have additionally committed to a more strategic development of women's entrepreneurship.

Finally, Dimension 8 of the SBA focuses on human capital for small and medium-sized businesses. With the lion's share of European businesses falling into this category and an increasing understanding that skills labour is key to promoting competitive businesses, the skills dimension of the SBA is being given particular consideration in EU enterprise, industrial and competitiveness policy. Prospective EU member states are therefore encouraged through the SBA to adapt and improve skills policy and support structures to improve the quality and availability of skills for SMEs.

2. Objective

The objective of human capital dimensions of the SBA (Dimension 1 and Dimension 8) is to support the governments, business world and civic interest groups in the EU's pre-accession region to build policies and support structures that allow a nation's education and training system to promote entrepreneurship particularly amongst young people and women while improving the skills base of management and workers employed in SMEs.

¹ European Commission (2008). Think Small First: a Small Business Act for Europe. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Brussels, 25.6.2008 COM(2008) 394 final.

² Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006.

3. The SBA assessment – two phases

The SBA assessment involves two distinct phases.

Firstly, each country undertakes its own self-assessment on the indicators for SBA Dimension 1 & 8. Given that SBA human capital dimensions involve a range of different stakeholder organisations, each with its own intelligence and experience, the contribution of each stakeholder is crucial to ensuring a comprehensive assessment. For example, lifelong entrepreneurial learning comprises all levels of formal education and their support agencies (e.g. teacher training organisations, curriculum and qualifications bodies), non-formal training provision (e.g. SME agencies) as well as employers bodies (e.g. Chambers of Commerce & Crafts). The multi-stakeholder issue also applies to women's entrepreneurship and SME skills, particularly involving economic and employment policy authorities, the training community as well as private sector and civic interest groups.

A second phase of the assessment involves an external assessment. This comprises a discussion, exchange of information and analysis of all issues covered by the SBA human capital dimensions between experts and policy makers from the stakeholder institutions in each country with their counterparts from SEECCEL and ETF. Both SEECCEL and ETF are designated partners of the European Commission in the SBA assessment process. Key issues and recommendations are then integrated into a report to be published by the five SBA support agencies (European Commission, ETF, SEECCEL, OECD and EBRD).

4. The SBA assessment tools

a) The indicators

Indicators to support the SBA assessment focus on a) entrepreneurial learning, b) women's entrepreneurship and c) SME skills. The indicators were elaborated by experts from all EU pre-accession countries and facilitated by SEECCEL and ETF experts. Each indicator addresses a particular policy issue. Taken as a whole, the indicators work towards building sustainable and workable policy solutions in all three areas.

For the 2015 SBA assessment, there are 13 indicators for entrepreneurial learning and 6 indicators for SME skills. A different approach to tracking performance on women's in entrepreneurship will be piloted in 2014. This involves binary and multiple choice questions in the three thematic blocks, namely, planning and design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

b) The criteria

Each indicator comprises a number of criteria framed within a 5-level step-ladder, each level increasingly more demanding in policy terms. The criteria comprise simple policy statements or facts (bulleted text). Those undertaking the assessment will consider the bullets and determine what evidence is available to satisfy the requirements of the bullet.

For example, to satisfy Policy Partnership (Level 3, Bullet 2) within SBA Dimension 1, those undertaking the self-assessment should provide details on the government body which provides leadership to the range of organisations working together to develop lifelong entrepreneurial learning.

c) The evidence

For bullets to be satisfied, evidence on each bullet must be concrete and verifiable. Hearsay or presumption, for example, would not be acceptable evidence.

d) Cumulative rule

Note that ranking on each indicator is cumulative. This means in order to achieve a Level 4 ranking, not only do the bullets at Level 4 need to be satisfied, but also the bullets at Level 2 and Level 3. The reason why the ranking process is

cumulative is that the indicators are designed to create systemic and sustainable change in the policy environment. Consequently, the bullets that feature within the 5-step sequence of an indicator work towards creating a system-based policy solution.

e) Ranking

Each indicator is ranked on a score of 1-5 set against the evidence supporting each of the bullets. When an indicator level contains more than one bullet, evidence supporting at least one bullet within the level will allow for a scoring of 0.5.

f) Comparative assessment

The indicators for a ranking of each country participating in the SBA assessment on each of the indicators as well as an overall assessment for the policy themes (entrepreneurial learning, women's entrepreneurship and SME skills). With 7 countries participating in the SBA assessment, each country can compare its performance with fellow pre-accession countries. Additionally, particularly when countries rank well on a given indicator, the assessment allows for sharing of experience and good practice by those countries.

5. How to approach the SBA self-assessment

Given the range of stakeholder institutions involved in entrepreneurial learning,³ women's entrepreneurship⁴ and SME skills⁵ the fullest possible engagement of stakeholder experts will maximize the potential of the intelligence and experience available to support the SBA assessment.

A first step to ensure a fully inclusive and efficient method for undertaking the national self-assessment is to establish working groups on a) entrepreneurial learning and b) women's entrepreneurship.

The task for both groups is to consider the indicators and to provide the National SBA Coordinator with an evidence-based assessment. A list of the SBA Coordinators is attached in annex.

To this end, a number of steps could be considered:

- a) SBA coordinator to identify all key stakeholders for i) entrepreneurial learning working group ii) women's entrepreneurship working group and iii) an SME skills working group;
- b) SBA coordinator to appoint a coordinator for each group. The task of the group coordinator is to ensure that all stakeholders are engaged and contribute to the assessment as well as acting as a primary reference point on their policy area to the SBA Coordinator;
- c) SBA coordinator's office calls a meeting to explain:
 - the wider rationale of the SBA;
 - the objective of the SBA assessment;

³ Stakeholders engaged for the assessment of entrepreneurial learning should include a mix of policy makers and practitioners and comprise a workable group of around 10 experts. Organisations represented should include experts/officials with knowledge of the compulsory schooling system, vocational education and training, adult education and university level education (including the R&D areas of university provision), private enterprise training providers, NGOs and non-profit entrepreneurship education providers, employment support services, representatives from the relevant ministries or government agencies.

⁴ Stakeholders engaged for the assessment of women's entrepreneurship should include a mix of policy makers and practitioners (public, private, non-governmental). Organisations represented should include experts/officials with knowledge of the women's entrepreneurship, women's employment, training and mentoring for women entrepreneurs, as well as financing of women's entrepreneurship and women-owned businesses. Women entrepreneurs as well as women's business associations would be important to include in the discussions.

⁵ Stakeholders for the SME skills assessment should include key education, employment and economy ministries as well as line ministries that have a specific small business or economic development interest e.g. regional development, agriculture ministries. Other organizations would involve SME, entrepreneurship agencies, national statistics office, women and youth entrepreneurship associations, key economic sector associations, Chambers and employers' organizations.

- links between Dimension 1 with other dimensions (e.g. Dimension 8 - innovation);
- the value and utility of Dimension 1 indicators for national developments set against wider EU preparations.

6. The SEECEL-ETF SBA Preparation Workshop

To support the SBA assessment in each country, a workshop will be held in Zagreb on 9-10 October. Organised by SEECEL and ETF, the objectives of the workshop is to prepare experts nominated by each of the pre-accession countries for

- a) undertaking the self-assessment on entrepreneurial learning and women's entrepreneurship
- b) supporting the SBA Coordinator with the external assessment.

The workshop will focus particularly on:

- **how:** the mechanics of assessment of each indicator;
- **what:** evidence-based justification for a ranking - significant materials, references
- **who:** maximizing the ranking on each indicator based on cross-stakeholder intelligence
- **next:** ways to move forwards and improve the performance on each indicator.

7. SEECEL SBA experts role in the assessment

National experts assigned to the SBA assessment drive will have the following tasks and responsibilities:

a) Producing a draft SBA self-assessment

National SBA experts will be in charge of preparing a national self-assessment on the human capital dimensions of the SBA. A team of three experts will make this national self-assessment, by noting which of the benchmark indicators have been met and by providing sources for verification of these achievements. The experts will host a workshop in their respective country with facilitators from ETF and SEECEL and with peer-reviewers from one other SEECEL member country. The aim of the workshop will be to discuss and confirm the self-assessment report and make final additions/amendments and to arrive at a provisional scoring for the country's SBA progress for all indicators. Once the national SBA coordinator produces the draft of the SBA assessment, the experts shall provide feedback, with particular focus on human capital dimensions of the SBA.

b) Assessing SBA performance in fellow pre-accession countries.

Through joint cooperation between ETF, SEECEL and national experts, a peer-learning process at the national and international level will be initiated within the SBA assessment, by allowing partner countries within the eight SEECEL member countries to participate in assessing SBA performance in other countries. This process will further contribute to further fostering evidence-based policy making in all member countries.

The peer-review process will consist of reviewing the partner country's self-assessment report, participating in an assessment workshop in the host country and participating in providing support and feedback in the follow-up/final scoring activities. A report following the peer assessment from each expert will be provided to SEECEL. The report should detail the overall results of SBA assessment workshop, noting agreement and disagreements between countries in the peer process. An emphasis should be given to justifications of the peer's assessment and ways forward. The experts from the country assigned will organise the time and location of the workshop, and the workshop will be facilitated by ETF and SEECEL.

The next sections address the indicators for each of the three human capital policy areas.

SBA Dimension 1: Indicators for Entrepreneurial Learning

Policy Framework for Lifelong Entrepreneurial Learning

Indicator 1.1: Policy Partnership

Rationale

The rationale behind this indicator is that in order for lifelong entrepreneurial learning to be efficient and effectiveness it requires policy coherence particularly between the different parts of the learning system and with those providing entrepreneurial learning outcomes the formal education system. This requires structured cooperation between all the parties concerned working in partnership.

Objective

The objective of the indicator is to encourage countries participating in the SBA assessment to consider ways and means of how the range of different organisations associated with the lifelong entrepreneurial learning can creates strategic value through partnership – essentially a co-working framework.

The crux of this indicator is the establishment of a national entrepreneurial learning partnership comprising particularly the policymakers and practitioners working on all forms of education and training, both formal and non-formal. Given that entrepreneurial learning has no one policy home, and is spread across different organisations in its delivery, cooperation, coordination and consensus on how the system building issues are addressed is important.

Note: The policy partnership indicator is a 'driver' indicator for the remaining SBA indicators addressing entrepreneurial learning given that the provisions of the policy partnership indicator , assuming these are addressed by the stakeholders, provide the basis for progress on the remaining indicators on entrepreneurial learning.

Level 1

A level 1 on this indicator reflects a situation where there is no formal cooperation between the range of stakeholders concerned. Ad hoc cooperation efforts between some of the stakeholders may be happening. To move forward on this indicator to reach a Level 2 requires all key stakeholders to engage in a formal exchange on ways and means for establishing and sustaining cooperation on lifelong entrepreneurial learning.

Level 2

For a level 2 ranking on this indicator, there needs to be concrete evidence that the key stakeholders (governmental, private & civic sectors) responsible for lifelong entrepreneurial learning are engaged in a discussion to formalize a cooperation arrangement to develop lifelong entrepreneurial learning. Evidence must be concrete and verifiable. Hearsay will not be sufficient evidence. For this could include a) press article on a cross-stakeholder planning event on cooperation for lifelong entrepreneurial learning, b) agenda and participant list of a meeting on cross-stakeholder cooperation for entrepreneurial learning.

Level 3

To satisfy a level 3 on this indicator, evidence satisfying all three bullets will be necessary.

■ Bullet 1

Firstly, evidence of a formal partnership for lifelong entrepreneurial learning could be:

- ✓ an inter-ministerial memorandum of understanding or exchange of letters to cooperate on lifelong entrepreneurial
- ✓ a steering committee to support a national strategy for lifelong entrepreneurial learning
- ✓ a national council or policy committee (education, enterprise) with a dedicated chapter of responsibility for lifelong entrepreneurial learning.

What is important here is that the key public policy authorities with an interest in entrepreneurial learning (education, employment, and economy/enterprise/entrepreneurship areas) are part of the partnership. Secondly, all levels of education are addressed within the partnership, not simply one aspect (e.g. university education). Thirdly, the partnership arrangement would need to demonstrate linkages to private and non-governmental sector as these play a key role in promoting non-formal entrepreneurial learning. Finally, evidence is required that the partnership arrangement recognizes entrepreneurship as a key competence which is a critical component of the SBA.

■ Bullet 2

Secondly, at bullet 2 evidence is required of a clearly defined leader of the partnership. Evidence for this could be

- ✓ Leadership formally attributed to one institution (e.g. education ministry) in the protocols for the partnership (e.g. MoU).
- ✓ Given the importance given within the SBA to system building it is most likely that the lead institution is public or governmental. However, if a ministry, for example, sits on the board of an NGO or other body and formally entrusts this leadership to that organization, this would meet the requirements of this bullet.

■ Bullet 3

The partnership arrangement will need to demonstrate it has an action plan already agreed for promote entrepreneurial learning. A draft action plan would be considered as acceptable evidence.

The action plan must include all levels of education as well as non-formal learning. All actions may not be in the phase of execution but the plan must be realistic in terms of objectives, set against timing and means.

Level 4

What lies behind the bullets at level 4 is firstly the importance of the partnership being provided with financial support. At issue here is simply a running budget to support the partnership on such issues as administration, holding of meetings, capacity-building events etc. And secondly, this level calls for evidence that entrepreneurial learning activities agreed by the partnership are being executed.

Examples of justification and key sources:

■ Bullet 1

Financial support to the entrepreneurial learning partnership could be

- ✓ a dedicated entry budget line in a ministry's annual budget or at least acknowledged within a broader budget allocation
- ✓ a budget allocation associated with the partnership's work in a national agency work plan

■ Bullet 2

What is important here is evidence that activities within the partnership's work action are under execution. This does not mean that all activities are being implemented but to satisfy this bullet there must be concrete evidence that at least one action defined within the action plan is being addressed.

Level 5

The bullets at this final level of the indicator specifically focus on impact that the entrepreneurial learning partnership is having.

■ Bullet 1

Evidence here could include:

- ✓ communication (letter, email) policy authorities on what needs to happen to improve entrepreneurial learning in the country
- ✓ written response to an open consultation on policy areas relevant to entrepreneurial learning (e.g. employment, national economic plan)

■ Bullet 2

This bullet checks for examples of how the partnership is contributing to wider strategic discussions on entrepreneurial learning and how these are being recognized. Evidence here could include

- ✓ a cross-referencing of the partnership's recommendation (see earlier bullet) and the direct integration of these recommendations into a national strategic development e.g. national plan for improvement of vocational education and training.
- ✓ Written communication from a policy authority to the partnership acknowledging that the partnership's recommendations have been taken on board. However, a letter acknowledging simply a receipt of recommendations would not satisfy this bullet.

Indicator 1.2: Policy Development Process

Rationale

Given that entrepreneurial learning touches on a wide range of education and training provision, the rationale behind this indicator is the need for coherence in policy instruments that cover these areas of education and training.

Objective

The objective of the indicator is to encourage the pre-accession countries to ensure that policy instruments for each part of the learning system are defined and give particular attention to curriculum, teacher training and governance of education outlets (e.g. schools, colleges, training centres, universities).

Level 1

A level 1 on this indicator reflects a situation where there is no policy guidance that could support schools, training centres, colleges or universities in developing entrepreneurial learning.

Level 2

For a level 2 ranking on this indicator, the assessment will need to highlight concrete examples of policy development addressing entrepreneurial learning. Ideally, examples for all parts of the learning system would be excellent but at this level there only needs to be at least two examples dealing with different parts of the learning system.

Evidence must be concrete and verifiable. Hearsay will not be sufficient evidence. Examples could be:

- ✓ a working document of the national qualifications authority which demonstrates that entrepreneurship key competence is being discussed as an area for development;
- ✓ conclusions of a national VET council on promoting entrepreneurship-specific (as opposed occupational-specific) apprenticeship placements;
- ✓ decision by a higher education council to introduce entrepreneurship within career advisory services for third-level students;
- ✓ proposal by the SME agency to package start-up training and access to finance for young entrepreneurs.

Level 3

To satisfy a level 3 on this indicator, entrepreneurial learning must be a clear feature within a country national development plan. Countries will have different types of governmental vision and strategic planning documents. In some cases this will be national economic development plan that is an important policy instrument for a country. What would also be acceptable in a national lifelong learning policy as long as that entrepreneurship is clearly an area for all parts of the formal and non-formal education and training system.

Level 4

What lies behind the bullets is a clear interface between policy on entrepreneurial learning and other companion policies a) broader education policy b) employment policy, c) SME policy and d) innovation (R&D) policy. At a level 4, this is a difficult indicator to satisfy because all 4 areas above must have a clear reference to entrepreneurial learning.

Examples of justification and key sources:

■ Bullets 1 & 2

A lifelong entrepreneurial learning policy document could be

- ✓ a single-purpose, dedicated document addressing lifelong entrepreneurial learning (all levels and forms of entrepreneurial learning i.e. formal and non-formal entrepreneurial learning) with a priority given to formal entrepreneurial learning and where curriculum is addressed as well as teacher development and school governance.
- ✓ an entrepreneurial learning framework policy document which brings together all the entrepreneurial learning components of all the other companion policy areas. As a framework policy it would require a special section addressing all levels & forms of entrepreneurial learning that includes curriculum, teacher training and school governance. This section would be interfaced with the four wider policy areas (broader education, employment, SME/economy and innovation (R&D)). The framework document would also need to have a clear owner/leader (e.g. Ministry of Education).

Level 5

Getting entrepreneurship competence as a key competence into national curriculum is a key challenge, primarily because it is not understood as a transversal competence to be promoted across the education curriculum (as opposed to a single subject approach).

As a key competence within the national curriculum (compulsory education), entrepreneurship will need to be part of the national assessment system (examinations) linked to national qualifications.

To satisfy this bullet, the following examples of types of evidence could be used:

- ✓ copy of national curriculum document where entrepreneurship as a key competence is referred
- ✓ details of entrepreneurial learning outcomes (compulsory education, all levels) within national assessment framework

Indicator 1.3: Monitoring & Evaluation

Rationale

All national policies bring better results when they are systematically monitored and evaluated. This ensures that the policies reflect current day concerns (e.g. rising youth unemployment, shift from EU pre-candidate status to candidate status) as well as allowing for policies to be corrected and improved based on evidence of their effectiveness.

Objective

The purpose of this indicator is that all pre-accession countries establish a M&E framework for lifelong entrepreneurial learning. The indicator consists of a number of concrete steps as to how a professional M&E framework can be built.

Level 1

A level 1 on this indicator reflects a situation where there is no formal M&E system in place. While there could be isolated M&E activities e.g. associated with certain projects (national or donor funded) but these would not be sufficient for system development purposes.

Level 2

For a level 2 ranking on this indicator, the assessment will demonstrate that basic data is only available on a number of actions or in selected areas of education and training. Examples of baseline data development could be;

- ✓ the number of schools in general secondary education that have introduced the 'entrepreneurial experience' for all pupils
- ✓ vocational education schools that have cooperation agreements with businesses

Level 3

To satisfy a level 3 on this indicator, the assessment should demonstrate data/intelligence in two areas: formal and non-formal learning. For formal learning, there should be evidence of evaluation during the reporting period in at least 2 areas (primary, secondary, vocational, or higher education) and at least 1 example of evaluation in non-formal learning. Examples of evaluation are as follows:

- ✓ mid-term evaluation of pilot project addressing training of teachers trained on entrepreneurship key competence
- ✓ peer reviewing amongst general secondary education schools with cooperation agreements with local businesses
- ✓ evaluation of employment outcomes for vocational school graduates that have followed entrepreneurial learning
- ✓ evaluation of university career support services with specific reference to entrepreneurship advice and support

Examples of evaluation for non-formal learning:

- ✓ an evaluation of an 'access to finance' module within a start-up training programme
- ✓ impact assessment and recommendations for improving mentoring of women start-up entrepreneurs.

Level 4

A level 4 requires a formal publication being made available to the public (on-line) and which captures the key issues on the country's entrepreneurial learning effort. The report should borrow on the data used for monitoring and evaluation purposes and include

- ✓ analytical comment particularly on what is effective or less effective (lessons learnt) and recommendations for further developments and improvements.
- ✓ highlight good practice that has been captured by the M&E effort.

The good practices could feature simply in the text to demonstrate, for example, how a particularly policy line (entrepreneurship key competence training for head teachers) has been executed in a local authority or good practices could be detailed in an annex to the report.

Level 5

A level 5 requires concrete evidence that recommendations for further developments in lifelong learning have been integrated into next-step policy reforms. The important point here is that the recommendations must be recognised in an approved policy document such as:

- ✓ national economic development plan
- ✓ employment policy or related document (policy paper on youth unemployment)
- ✓ SME policy
- ✓ teacher development policy

These recommendations could come from publications or reports such as

- ✓ a specific M&E report on the entrepreneurial learning system as a whole (see level 4, above)
- ✓ a high-level review of entrepreneurial learning (e.g. SBA assessment report or European Commission annual progress report on the country)
- ✓ M&E report of a donor-funded activity.

Indicator 1.4: Non-formal Entrepreneurial Learning

Rationale

A considerable amount of entrepreneurial learning happens outside the formal education system. This 'non-formal' entrepreneurial learning is just as important as what happens inside the school, college and university system. Non-formal entrepreneurial learning is generally supported by private and non-governmental organisations. But it may also take place in formal education settings but is not subject to the rigors of assessment and examination typical of the wider curriculum offered by schools and universities. Non-formal entrepreneurial learning allows for greater flexibility in contents and timing and may run alongside standard education programmes, providing complimentary knowledge and skills or be delivered independently of the general education programmes. What is important is its impact – that it can have considerable influence on people's perceptions, interest and openness to more entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviour.

Objective

The purpose of this indicator is to build awareness and engagement of all parts of society into the wider entrepreneurial learning effort.

Note that this indicator dovetails with other indicators (e.g. policy partnership and policy development process) that give particular attention to non-formal entrepreneurial learning.

Level 1

At this level there is no structured approach to promoting or sharing non-formal entrepreneurial learning. However, the assessment will demonstrate examples of non-formal entrepreneurial learning.

Level 2

To satisfy the requirements of a Level 2, there will need to be at least 2 examples of an agreement between at least 2 organisations (public, private, non-governmental) whose objective is promote entrepreneurial learning of children (up to 18 years) and/or young people (< 30 years).

Level 3

For a level 3, a working group specifically dedicated to non-formal entrepreneurial learning (possibly this forms part of the entrepreneurial learning policy partnership – see earlier indicator) needs to be in place. Members of this group could be:

- ✓ representatives of non-formal education providers (e.g. NGOs, SME support organisations)
- ✓ ministry officials (e.g. education, employment, economy)
- ✓ specific interest groups (e.g. young entrepreneurs associations)

A second evidence issue to fulfil for Level 2 is an example how the working group advises on policy improvements. Examples of this could include:

- ✓ Working Group formal response (in writing) to an economic or employment policy review
- ✓ Critique, proposals or recommendations on entrepreneurial learning by the Working Group into a public meeting (e.g. roundtable discussion or presentation at a conference). Evidence could be minutes of a meeting, a press release, newspaper article, conference report etc.

Evidence of an agreement could be:

- ✓ Exchange of letters between the two or more organisations agreeing to cooperate on entrepreneurial learning of children and/or young people
- ✓ A Memorandum of Understanding between two or more organisations agreeing to cooperate on entrepreneurial learning of children and/or young people

- ✓ Evidence not considered appropriate would be a contract between an organization (NGO, bank, private individual) that provides funding for entrepreneurial learning development and a entrepreneurial learning service provider.

Level 4

A level 4 requires a national event where non-formal entrepreneurial learning projects are show-cased.

Examples of a high level event could be

- ✓ National education or employment conference that includes a recognition for non-formal entrepreneurial learning.
- ✓ National entrepreneurship fair that includes a recognition for non-formal entrepreneurial learning.

A event held at school, local community or regional level would not meet the requirements of this level.

Examples of a recognition could be

- ✓ a financial award
- ✓ a title e.g. Entrepreneurship Mentor of the Year
- ✓ a prize e.g. travel and conference participation at EU SME Assembly conference.

Examples of non-formal entrepreneurial learning projects could include

- ✓ After-school entrepreneurship youth clubs
- ✓ Mentoring for young hi-tech entrepreneurs
- ✓ Quality assurance of start-up coaches

Examples of show-casing could include:

- ✓ presentation of the non-formal entrepreneurial learning at conference in plenary or break-out group (included in the conference agenda)
- ✓ a workshop stand (included in conference information materials)

Evidence not considered admissible for show-casing would include photographs of project staff at a conference.

Level 5

A Level 5 is linked back directly to the high-level event which features at Level 4.

To satisfy a Level 5, there will need to be concrete evidence that aspects of the work of two of the non-formal entrepreneurial learning projects that were show-cased in the previous year have been taken on board by other entrepreneurial learning providers.

Examples could be:

- ✓ Showcase 1: youth entrepreneurship mentor training programme has been adapted by another training provider (letter of recognition of value/interest of training provider in the mentor training including evidence that the mentor training programme has taken place)
- ✓ Showcase 2: web-based start-up self-learning tool has been translated and is now available in another language.

Indicator 1.5: Good practice exchange

Rationale

It is generally difficult to identify good practice in entrepreneurial learning which is often isolated and locked inside excellent organisations. This indicator aims to promote access to good practice in entrepreneurial learning.

Objective

The purpose of this indicator is to encourage countries to make better use of the good practice on entrepreneurial learning already available at home. Firstly, the indicator is targeted at education and training providers to encourage them to share what they are best at with the aim of creating scale as others borrow on the good practice. Secondly, the indicator is targeted at policy makers who can borrow on good practice to shape policies involving entrepreneurial learning dimensions.

Level 1

A level 1 on this indicator would indicate that there are no efforts to promote the exchange of entrepreneurial learning practice inside the country, apart from informal exchanges between service providers.

Level 2

To score on a level 2, the country would need to demonstrate that a network of entrepreneurial learning providers – both formal and non-formal (e.g. schools, colleges, universities, NGOs, SME support training organisations) meet at least once a year to exchange good practice.

The meeting could be:

- ✓ a national conference (see, non-formal learning indicator) – evidence to support this level should demonstrate that good practice exchange is a significant feature of the conference (e.g. dedicated feature of the conference programme);
- ✓ an on-line good practice webinar: evidence here needs to demonstrate that the webinar has been called and targeting the entire entrepreneurial learning community (participant list at the webinar will be important evidence) and specifically have entrepreneurial good practices feature in the presentations.

Given that entrepreneurship fairs are very open and informal events, evidence of a professional exchange of good practice, beyond an informal exchange, may be difficult to capture for the purposes of this level.

Level 3

To ensure a level 3, the SBA assessment will need to demonstrate that at least two entrepreneurial learning practices (either from within the country or from outside) are in the process of being drawn upon by other education or training providers.

Examples could include:

- ✓ Innovative teaching practice employed by a SEECEL pilot schools is being incorporated into a school with no formal SEECEL linkages. A letter between the SEECEL school and a fellow school for the purpose of good practice adoption is an example of evidence for this level;
- ✓ EU framework entrepreneurial learning outcomes are being piloted in schools: evidence for this good practice adoption could be a formal note on curriculum reform referring to the EU framework learning outcomes

Level 4

To achieve a level 4, evidence of domestic good practice being transferred outside the country will be necessary. In this regard, protocols or agreements between education and training providers from the country with international counterparts demonstrating outward transfer of know-how or better practice will be necessary.

Level 5

To achieve a level 5, the assessment will need to demonstrate that a good practice in entrepreneurial learning (national or international) has impacted on national policy.

Examples of good practice impacting on policy could be:

- ✓ youth entrepreneurship training combined with access to finance in the United Kingdom as an example of policy innovation is included in a national level policy preparation or a finalised paper. The UK good practice would need to be clearly referenced in the policy paper;
- ✓ national guidelines for improved school governance put greater emphasis on school-enterprise cooperation, providing a concrete example from a school (national, international).

Lower Secondary Education Upper Secondary Education

Although this section of the guidelines covers two distinct parts of the education system, the indicators within each level of the education are the same, and the criteria/benchmarks for meeting a specific score within each indicator are almost identical (with the exception of specific targets for different educational levels). For this reason, this section will provide guidance for assessing the indicators for both lower-secondary and upper-secondary education.

Indicator 1.6 & 1.9: Entrepreneurial School

Rationale:

The rationale for this indicator is that in order to support the creation of an entrepreneurial society, schools (from primary to upper-secondary education) need to become entrepreneurial themselves. This is not to say that entrepreneurial schools will turn into businesses and commercialise their activities and culture, but instead they will act as centres for promoting an entrepreneurial mind set in the classroom and in everyday school life⁶. Entrepreneurial schools should also fully interact and cooperate with their stakeholders (parents, local community, business community, alumni, NGOs, etc.) and do so in innovative and creative ways.

Objective:

The objective of this indicator is to encourage schools from primary to upper-secondary education to create an environment in which entrepreneurial mind sets are supported. This means ensuring that both students and teachers take part in school-based entrepreneurial activities and that these are organised with the involvement of stakeholders (as listed above).

Level 1

A Level 1 on this indicator would indicate that there are no examples at all of school-enterprise cooperation at lower-secondary or upper-secondary level. At this level, there may be some individual examples of school cooperation with relevant stakeholders in the local community, but none of these examples of cooperation are regular, systematic or regulated through a formal agreement.

Level 2

Bullet 1

To qualify for a Level 2 score, the country needs to demonstrate that at least two schools (at the lower- and upper-secondary levels) have included entrepreneurial learning elements into their schools' annual programmes⁷, as a curricular and/or extra-curricular activity.

⁶ SEECCEL (2011). *Entrepreneurial Learning: A Key Competence Approach - ISCED Level 2*. p.44

⁷ Some schools develop multi-annual school plans of instead annual plans. All further references to "annual plans" also encompass multi-annual plans, where these are applicable.

Evidence should consist of a copy of the school's official annual plan in which the entrepreneurial learning activities are highlighted (or which is accompanied by a note on which page these can be found). Since the emphasis of this criterion is the "institutionalisation" of entrepreneurial learning, evidence about individual examples of entrepreneurship-related activities would not be sufficient.

Bullet 2

Another criterion for a Level 2 score is that evidence should be provided that the management staff of at least two schools within each given level education have participated in trainings on entrepreneurship/entrepreneurial learning.

Evidence could include:

- ✓ Certificates of attendance at training
- ✓ Agendas, materials and/or reports of trainings, including a list of participants of the training.

Level 3

Bullet 1

The first criterion for reaching a Level 3 score is the same as Level 2 (Bullet 1), but with a specific target that needs to be met. In this case, the country needs to provide evidence that at least 10% of all lower-secondary schools and at least 20% of upper-secondary schools in the country have included entrepreneurial learning as an integral part of their schools' annual programmes. The inclusion of entrepreneurial learning must be as a curricular activity. The % of schools is calculated out of the total number of all schools within each level of education.

Evidence should consist of:

- ✓ A numbered list of all schools that have met this criterion, accompanied with data from an official source on the total number of schools with the given level of education (lower-secondary or upper-secondary education), in order to confirm the percentage
- ✓ A copy of the schools' official annual plans (or multi-annual plan, if applicable) in which the entrepreneurial learning activities are highlighted (or noting on which page these can be found).

Bullet 2

In order to reach Level 3, the country also needs to demonstrate that management staff from at least 20% of all lower-secondary schools and from at least 30% of all upper-secondary schools has participated in a training programme related to entrepreneurial learning. The method of calculating the % of schools is the same as described for the previous Bullet.

Evidence could include:

- ✓ A list of all schools whose management staff participated in training on entrepreneurial learning, accompanied with data from an official source on the total number of schools with the given level of education, in order to confirm the percentage
- ✓ Certificates of attendance at training
- ✓ Agendas, materials and/or reports of trainings, including a list of participants of the training.

An additional criterion within Bullet 2 is that the country should have in place an "entrepreneurial school network", which allows for exchange of information and good practices between schools. A network in this case can be a formal or non-formal initiative, but must allow for its members to regularly communicate and to exchange ideas and good practices. In this sense, networks that use online platforms are especially valuable, since they allow for much wider coverage and access to resources, and are in line with Europe's Digital Agenda. as well as The optimal network

Evidence could therefore include:

- ✓ An official document on the establishment of the network and its members
- ✓ A web page or social media page documenting the aims, activities and members of the network (and confirming that the network is active).
- ✓ An agenda, materials and/or minutes of events or working meetings of the network (in this case, several examples should be provided to prove the regularity and continuity of the network, i.e. that it is not an ad hoc event)

Level 4

Bullet 1

The first criterion for reaching a Level 4 score is the same as Bullet 1 on Level 3, but with a higher target. In this case, the country needs to provide evidence that at least 50% of all lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools in the country have included entrepreneurial learning as an integral part of their schools' annual programmes. The additional target that needs to be reached for Level 4, however, is that entrepreneurship needs to be included in all elements of the school's programme, which includes the curriculum, school-based activities, teacher and school management training, school-business cooperation, career guidance, etc. The method of calculating the % of schools is the same as described for the previous Levels.

Evidence should consist of:

- ✓ A list of all schools that have met this criterion, accompanied with data from an official source on the total number of schools with the given level of education (lower-secondary or upper-secondary education).
- ✓ Report (or other document) from the Ministry on the implementation of annual school programmes at lower- and upper-secondary education, confirming the percentage of schools that have included entrepreneurial learning as an integral part of their annual programmes

Bullet 2

This criterion is also an extension of the criterion at Level 3 (Bullet 2) related to the "entrepreneurial school network". In order to reach Level 4, the country needs to demonstrate that the network has promoted school-to-school cooperation (in the area of entrepreneurial learning), as well as school-to-enterprise cooperation. In addition, the network needs to have contributed as a stakeholder to the formulation of national (and/or local) policies related to entrepreneurial learning.

Evidence of the networks' achievements could include:

- ✓ Information about a project led by the network, or in which the network participated in as a partner
- ✓ A web page or social media page demonstrating information exchange/dissemination the topics mentioned above
- ✓ An agenda, materials and/or minutes of events or working meetings of the network demonstrating information exchange/dissemination the topics mentioned above
- ✓ Communication (letter, email) towards policy authorities on what needs to happen to improve entrepreneurial learning in the country
- ✓ A written response to an open consultation on policy areas relevant to entrepreneurial learning (e.g. education, employment, national economic plan).

Level 5

Bullet 1

Once again, the first criterion for reaching a Level 5 links back to at Levels 2, 3 and 4 (Bullet 1) regarding the proportion of schools that have included entrepreneurial learning as an integral part of their schools' annual programmes. To reach Level 5, the country needs to demonstrate that at least 75% of all schools (at lower-secondary or upper-secondary level) have included entrepreneurial learning in all elements of their annual programmes. The method of calculating the % of schools is the same as was described in previous Levels.

However, an additional criterion for reaching Level 5 is that all the mentioned schools must have ensured that their students have had a "real entrepreneurial experience". This refers to activities that take place outside the classroom and that put into practice an entrepreneurial initiative. Examples could include "classic" entrepreneurial initiatives such as putting into practice a business plan developed by students, e.g. producing and selling products that students have developed, thereby acting as a "mini-enterprise/cooperatives" (including as a social enterprise or green enterprise). But examples could also include the active participation of students in student clubs, in launching campaigns or community-based projects related to social or ecological issues, or in establishing cooperation with existing SMEs (such as ensuring internships for students).

Evidence should consist of:

- ✓ A list of all schools that have met these criteria, accompanied with data from an official source on the total number of schools with the given level of education (lower-secondary or upper-secondary education).
- ✓ Report (or other document) from the Ministry on the implementation of annual school programmes at lower- and upper-secondary education, confirming the percentage of schools that have included entrepreneurial learning as an integral part of their annual programmes

Bullet 2

A Level 5 score also requires evidence that all entrepreneurial schools (i.e. the schools that satisfy the criterion of the previous bullet) have a system to track and follow the career paths of its graduated students. The emphasis of this tracking system is to follow those students who have undergone an entrepreneurial experience, that is, to create an "Entrepreneurial Alumni Club". The aim of this tracking would be both to collect information from previous students on their career development (and on what proportion of them have launched their own business), and to ensure that the school continues to communicate with their alumni and encourage their most successful entrepreneurial graduates to "give back" to the school in their later careers by presenting their experiences and/or by acting as mentors to students.

Evidence should consist of:

- ✓ A list of all schools that have met this criterion
- ✓ A web page, report or other document from the entrepreneurial schools in question describing how the tracking system works, how many alumni have been tracked, and how many alumni participate in alumni activities.
- ✓ Report (or other document) from the Ministry on the implementation of annual school programmes at lower- and upper-secondary education, confirming the percentage of schools that have graduate tracking systems in place
- ✓ A national database that includes information on tracking graduates from schools.

Bullet 3

Finally, a Level 5 score can be awarded if the national education system has included entrepreneurial learning outcomes as an integral part of the National Qualifications Framework. Evidence should consist of the country's National Qualifications Framework in which the entrepreneurial learning outcomes are highlighted (or which is accompanied by a note on which page these can be found).

Indicator 1.7 & 1.10: Entrepreneurial Teacher

Rationale

Developing an entrepreneurial way of thinking in a society necessitates that teachers from primary to upper-secondary education adopt entrepreneurial competences and become entrepreneurial teachers.

The Entrepreneurial Teacher is defined as a teacher who understands entrepreneurship, is entrepreneurially literate and able to teach using active teaching/learning methods and a student-centred approach. Such teachers can be change agents in creating an entrepreneurial environment within the school and are facilitators in the process of promoting entrepreneurship as a key competence.

Objective

The objective of this indicator is to empower teachers to develop an entrepreneurial mind set and apply it to their teaching content and methods, thus promoting an entrepreneurial mind set among their students. Teachers should both encourage and support their students to become involved in concrete entrepreneurial activities, including (if possible) starting-up a business.

Level 1

A Level 1 on this indicator would indicate that there are no examples at all of teachers taking their own initiatives in promoting entrepreneurial learning or who have had in-service training relating to entrepreneurial learning.

Level 2

Bullet 1

To qualify for a Level 2 score, the country needs to provide at least two examples of in-service training that has been organised for teachers and/or management staff of schools. The examples can include training initiated, organised or encouraged by the school management, or training that teachers organised individually, at their own initiative. Entrepreneurial learning teacher training is defined in this case as training that prepares teachers to be able to teach the entrepreneurship as a key competence in their regular teaching practices (developing learning outcomes and improving learning, teaching and assessment methods).

Evidence could include:

- ✓ Certificates of attendance at training
- ✓ Agendas, materials and/or reports of trainings at selected schools, including a list of participants of the training.

Bullet 2

Another criterion for a Level 2 score is that evidence should be provided that teachers from at least two schools have established cooperation (at their own initiative) with SMEs, by including contributions of SMEs into curricular or extra-curricular activities (e.g. study visits to SMEs, inviting guest speakers, organising student placements and internships). The links with SME's in this case do not necessarily need to be through formal agreements with the school.

Evidence could include:

- ✓ Report of individual teacher annual activities (which provides a basis for annual reports of schools)
- ✓ Communication (e-mail, letter) between teachers and SMEs confirming the establishment of cooperation
- ✓ A statement/report from the teachers in question describing the type of cooperation established
- ✓ A web/press article describing the established cooperation.

Level 3

Bullet 1

To qualify for a Level 3 score, the country needs provide evidence that pre-service teacher training programmes related to entrepreneurial learning exist in the country (at least 1 such programme should exist). In order to meet this Level, an existing pre-service teacher training programme must include courses or modules that prepare teachers to be able to teach the entrepreneurship as a key competence in their regular teaching practices (including entrepreneurial learning outcomes, learning, teaching and assessment methods).

The evidence for this criterion should be:

- ✓ A qualifications framework for teachers, which includes a list of institutions which provide such training
- ✓ A list of existing pre-service teacher training programmes that include entrepreneurial learning (to be obtained from the country's teacher training authority)
- ✓ An official document of the teacher training providers describing the above-mentioned training programmes, and highlighting the parts in which entrepreneurial learning content is included (or noting on which page it can be found).

Bullet 2

Another criterion that needs to be met to reach a Level 3 score is that at least 20% of all teachers in lower-secondary education and at least 25% of all teachers in upper-secondary education must have completed in-service teacher training related to entrepreneurial learning (the definition of what such training needs to achieve is the same as for Bullet 1). The % of teachers is calculated out of the total number of all teachers within each level of education.

The evidence for this criterion should be:

- ✓ A list of all in-service training programmes related to entrepreneurial learning that have been held for teachers, including a numbered list of participants (list to be obtained from the country's teacher training authority), accompanied by data on the total number of teachers within the given level of education (in order to confirm the percentage)
- ✓ The syllabi of all in-service training programmes that include entrepreneurial learning from different teacher training providers, highlighting the entrepreneurial learning content (or noting on which page it can be found).

Level 4

Bullet 1

The first criterion for reaching a Level 4 score is the same as the Level 3 (Bullet 1) criterion regarding pre-service training, but with a specific target that needs to be met. In this case, the country needs to provide evidence that at least 25% of all pre-service teacher training programmes (for both lower- and upper-secondary teachers) have integrated entrepreneurial learning in their content. In addition, this criterion requires that the entrepreneurial learning content be incorporated in all elements of these programmes: this means that instead of providing a single module or course related to entrepreneurial learning, the entrepreneurial learning outcomes should be incorporated into all subjects taught to students who are training to become teachers.

The evidence for this criterion should be:

- ✓ A list of all pre-service training programmes that meet this criterion, accompanied by data on the total number of pre-service training programmes within the given level of education, in order to confirm the percentage (list and data to be obtained from the country's teacher training authority)

- ✓ Examples of examinations for students at teacher training institutions that include content related to entrepreneurial learning
- ✓ The syllabi of all pre-service training programmes that include entrepreneurial learning from different teacher training providers, highlighting the entrepreneurial learning content (or noting on which page it can be found).

Bullet 2

The second criterion also links back to Level 3 (Bullet 2), regarding in-service teacher training. To reach a Level 4 score, at least 50% of all teachers (at both lower- and upper-secondary level) must have completed a nationally-recognised entrepreneurial learning in-service teacher training.

The evidence for this criterion should be:

- ✓ A numbered list of teachers who have participated in in-service training programmes related to entrepreneurial learning accompanied by data on the total number of teachers within the given level of education, in order to confirm the percentage (list to be obtained from the country's teacher training authority)
- ✓ The syllabi of all in-service training programmes that include entrepreneurial learning from different teacher training providers, highlighting the entrepreneurial learning content (or noting on which page it can be found).

Bullet 3

The third criterion for reaching a Level 4 score is to provide evidence that teaching materials for all taught subjects at the school have integrated learning outcomes related to entrepreneurial learning.

The evidence for this criterion should be handbooks for teachers (that accompany school textbooks) that incorporate entrepreneurial learning outcomes.

Level 5

Bullet 1

The first criterion for a Level 5 score combines the criteria related to pre-service and in-service teacher training mentioned for Levels 3 to 4, and states that all such programmes must include entrepreneurial learning as an integral part.

The evidence for this criterion should be:

- ✓ A report or written statement by the country's teacher training agency confirming that all pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes meet this criterion.

Bullet 2

This criterion is closely related to the indicator for "Entrepreneurial School" - Level 2 (Bullet 2) and Level 3 (Bullet 2). As mentioned for that indicator, the country should have in place an "entrepreneurial school network", which allows for exchange of information and good practice between schools and teachers. In order to meet the criterion within the Entrepreneurial Teacher indicator, care should be taken to check that the network has an online platform and that it allows for individual *teachers* to network, communicate and exchange experience, and not just for school management.

Evidence of the network's achievements is the same the same as for the Indicator "Entrepreneurial School", Level 2 (Bullet 2) and Level 3 (Bullet 2)

Bullet 3

The final criterion for achieving a Level 5 score is that the state assessment of teacher competence in the country must include an assessment of the teachers' ability to promote the key competence of entrepreneurship.

The evidence for this criterion could include:

- ✓ That the content of the state examination for teachers should include content related to entrepreneurial learning
- ✓ That teacher evaluations at the school level include an assessment of teachers' ability to promote entrepreneurial learning

Indicator 1.8 & 1.11: Entrepreneurial Student

Rationale

The starting point for an entrepreneurial society is to build entrepreneurial citizens with a positive attitude towards an entrepreneurial way of thinking. In order to achieve this goal, the development of an entrepreneurial way of thinking and an entrepreneurial mind set must be approached systematically, starting at an early age. Schools at the lower-secondary and upper-secondary level must therefore ensure that students who complete their schooling are able to turn ideas into action, which includes being creative, innovative, risk-taking, able to plan and manage projects. School-leavers who acquire the key competence of entrepreneurship will contribute to economic growth, innovation and job creation, and will help create an entrepreneurial society and economy.

Objective

The objective of this indicator is to encourage national education policy and school policies to proactively and systematically work towards ensuring that all students who complete lower-secondary and upper-secondary education are entrepreneurially competent and practice and undertake entrepreneurial activities within their schooling.

Level 1

Level 1 indicates that there are no examples at all of school-based activities related to entrepreneurial learning, and that entrepreneurial learning is not mentioned as a key competence in the national education curriculum.

Level 2

Bullet 1

To qualify for a Level 2 score, the country needs to demonstrate that at least two schools (at the lower- and upper-secondary levels) have implemented entrepreneurial school-based activities. These activities can take place on an ad hoc basis, and do not necessarily require the schools to have included the activities in their annual school plans. The term “entrepreneurial activities” can refer both to curricular and/or extra-curricular activities, with examples such as the inclusion of entrepreneurship content into lessons (using traditional teaching methods), of study visits to enterprises, or of “real entrepreneurship experience”.

Evidence could include:

- ✓ Lesson plans of individual schools that have included entrepreneurship content into their classes
- ✓ Report, press article or photographs documenting the implementation of entrepreneurial activities within selected schools

Bullet 2

A Level 2 score also requires countries to have formally included entrepreneurial learning into their national curriculum, and to define entrepreneurship therein as a key competence, and which therefore needs to be covered at both primary and secondary education. For this level, there is no evidence required to prove that entrepreneurial learning is implemented in practice within schools. For this reason, it is sufficient to provide a copy of the national curriculum document as evidence, highlighting where entrepreneurial learning is mentioned (or noting on which page it can be found).

Level 3

Bullet 1

The first criterion for reaching a Level 3 score is that at least 10% of all students at the lower-secondary level and at least 20% of all students at the upper-secondary level must have engaged in and actively participated in school-based entrepreneurial activities. As with the previous Level, entrepreneurial activities should be organised as curricular, not extra-curricular activities. The % of students is calculated out of the total number of all students within each level of education.

Evidence should consist of a report by the Ministry (based on annual school reports) confirming the number of schools that have reported having carried out such activities, accompanied by data on the total number of schools at that level of education.

Bullet 2

Following on closely from Level 2 (Bullet 1), in which evidence was needed to confirm that some schools implement some form of entrepreneurial activity, this criterion goes one step further and requires countries to demonstrate that at least two schools (at the lower-secondary and upper-secondary levels) have included entrepreneurial learning into at least two subjects in their school, and have done so by defining learning outcomes relating to entrepreneurship into these subjects.

Evidence for this criterion should be copies of lesson plans of selected schools that have included entrepreneurship content into their classes.

Level 4

Bullet 1

The precondition for reaching Level 4 is that the country has included entrepreneurship as a key competence within its National Qualifications Framework.

Having met this precondition, this criterion states that 35% of all students (at both lower- and upper-secondary level) are acquiring the key competence of entrepreneurship as defined within the National Qualifications Framework. This means that, in order to reach Level 4, a large number of schools will need to have:

- ✓ Comprehensively and systematically included entrepreneurial learning into their lesson plans and in other school-based activities,
- ✓ Included all the learning outcomes that constitute the entrepreneurship key competence into their lesson plans
- ✓ Tracked the number of students who have taken the classes/participated in the activities that have results in those learning outcomes.

For this reason, the evidence for this criterion must be data collected from schools by a central governmental authority (ministry or agency) that confirm the number of students that have acquired the key competency of entrepreneurship.

Bullet 2

This criterion is similar to Bullet 1, but differs in that it assumes that a large majority of students in the education system have at least partially acquired the key competence of entrepreneurship. In other words, while the expectation at Level 4 is that only 35% of students will have acquired the key competence of entrepreneurship in full, it is expected that 75% of all students (at both lower- and upper-secondary level) will have been in contact with some content or activities related to entrepreneurship.

As above, this means that almost all lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools will need to have included entrepreneurship-related content into their curricular and extra-curricular activities. This also means that each school will need to track the number of students who have taken the classes/participated in the activities that have results in those learning outcomes.

For this reason, the evidence for this criterion must be data collected from schools by a central governmental authority (ministry or agency) that confirm the number of students that have participated in an school-based activity related to entrepreneurship.

Bullet 3

Finally, in order to reach a Level 4 score, at least 2% of all lower-secondary students and at least 10% of upper-secondary students participate in different local/national entrepreneurship-related competitions. These include business plan competitions, applications for business start-ups, being part of an incubator, product/ business start-up competition, cooperatives, etc.

The evidence needed to confirm this criterion is:

- ✓ Reports and/or press articles about various entrepreneurship-related competitions, which include a list of all participants and include details on which schools the competitors are currently attending. Accompanying this document should be official data on the total number of students at each educational level (to confirm the percentage).

Level 5

Bullet 1

Following on from Level 4 (Bullet 1) regarding the proportion of students who have acquired the key competency of entrepreneurship, a country can be awarded a Level 5 score if it can demonstrate that all students who complete upper-secondary education are entrepreneurially competent (as defined within the National Qualifications Framework, relating to EQF levels 1 and 2).

To reach this achievement, all lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools will need to have integrated entrepreneurship-related content into all their activities. The evidence for this criterion can therefore be

- ✓ a national report by a central governmental authority (ministry or agency) that confirms that every school in the country has reached this goal
- ✓ a copy of the national state exam (if applicable in a given country) that includes content related to entrepreneurial learning (in compulsory courses) at the lower- and/or upper-secondary level

Bullet 2

An additional criterion for reaching Level 5 is that at least 20% of all lower-secondary students and at least 30% of upper-secondary students must have had a practical entrepreneurial experience. This refers to activities that take place outside the classroom and that put into practice an entrepreneurial initiative. Examples could include “classic” entrepreneurial initiatives such as putting into practice a business plan developed by students, e.g. producing and selling products that students have developed, thereby acting as a “mini-enterprise/cooperatives” (including as a social enterprise or green enterprise). But examples could also include the active participation of students in student clubs, in launching campaigns or community-based projects related to social or ecological issues, or in establishing cooperation with existing SMEs (such as ensuring internships for students).

The evidence for this criterion should be data collected from schools by a central governmental authority (ministry or agency) that confirm the number of students that have participated in a practical entrepreneurial activity.

Bullet 3

There is an additional criterion to meet in order to be awarded a Level 5 score (although this only relates to upper-secondary education). This requires providing evidence that at least 5% of all students who have completed upper-secondary school have started their own business within the three year period after graduation. This criterion is closely related to the indicator for “Entrepreneurial School” - Level 5 (Bullet 2). Namely, in order to report on this criterion, schools will need to have in place tracking system to follow the career paths of its graduated students.

Evidence should therefore consist of:

Data extracted from schools’ graduate tracking systems on the number of students who have launched start-ups with a three-year period after graduation.

Secondary School

Indicator 1.12: Practical Entrepreneurial Experience for Young People (* Secondary school only)

Rationale

'Learning by doing' is considered essential to developing the entrepreneurship key competence and entrepreneurship skills for young people.

Objective

The purpose of this indicator is to encourage EU pre-accession countries to respond to the EU's recommendation that all young people should have completed a practical entrepreneurial experience by the time they complete compulsory education.

A practical entrepreneurial experience may take place within the school or outside the school environment (e.g. in an enterprise or community organization) or in a combination of both. The practical entrepreneurial experience should not be confused with general work or vocational experience. The practical entrepreneurial experience involves the development of an idea either individually or within group and executing the idea with a result. Each practical entrepreneurial experience must have a clearly defined and achievable learning. The learning outcome should bring added-value for the individual pupil, the class, the school or outside group (e.g. community organization, businesses or local economy).

Note 1. The practical entrepreneurial experience may feature as part of the formal curriculum or be implemented outside the formal curriculum. Where the learning outcome of the entrepreneurship key competence is included in the practical entrepreneurial learning experience, this could feature in the formal assessment.

Note 2. When the practical entrepreneurial experience is promoted in vocational education and training, the experience and learning outcomes should be clearly distinguished from the occupational learning outcomes.

Example 1

- *Idea:* a pupil draws up a career plan for the first 5 years following completion of compulsory education. The careers plan should include at least one entrepreneurship option;
- *Action point:* the pupil presents and discusses the career plan with fellow students, careers guidance services, local businessmen or women or local SME support agency;
- *Learning outcome:* Based on feedback, the pupil will revise and complete his/her career plan giving particular attention to the entrepreneurship options. If the entrepreneurship career plan includes further education and training, options could include researching further education courses that have this should include Value-added: based on feedback.

Example 2

- *Idea:* in response to a natural disaster (local flooding, earth quake in another country), a group of pupils elaborate and execute a funding raising plan to support people affected by the disaster targeting local businesses, philanthropists and local communities.
- *Action point:* leadership and tasks (e.g. communication materials, advocacy tools, opening & closing of dedicated disaster fund bank account including money order transfers, press and media engagement) are assigned to member of the group with time frames, accountability, monitoring and reporting arrangements);

- *Learning outcome:* The learning outcomes for the groups (with individual learning outcomes defined for tasks assigned) would include: ability to define a realizable a) objective (e.g. €400 to be raised), b) understanding and experience of team working in maximizing the value of each individual's contribution to the fund-raising project, c) creativity through group pooling of ideas as to who specifically to target in the fund-raising campaign and d) opportunity identification, determining opportunities for the individual group members, the group and the school group through the project over and above the charitable action and direct support to the disaster-affected communities.

Example 3

- *Idea:* pupils establish a school-based, pupil managed firm or virtual firm.
- *Action:* pupils draw up a business plan set against a market gap or opportunity, allocate responsibilities (e.g. management, marketing, raising start-up capital, finance and taxation obligations, production, quality control), register the business, execute the business plan, review results, close the company or transfer to a next group of students for further development of the firm.
- *Learning outcome:* Pupils both understand and have personally experienced a typical business cycle, including responsibilities and accountabilities for each of the firm's staff.

Level 1

A level 1 reflects a scenario where there is no evidence of practical entrepreneurial experiences within secondary education.

Level 2

To score on a level 2, there should be concrete examples of practical entrepreneurial experiences that are being realized in the schooling system, ideally including details on the activities and learning outcomes.

Examples

- ✓ a database with details on the schools and activities involving practical entrepreneurial experiences;
- ✓ a publication listing practical entrepreneurial experiences as well as the schools implementing them.

Level 3

To ensure a level 3, two areas of evidence need to be satisfied:

- ✓ *integration into education policy or strategy:* the most recent formal education strategy or policy documentation should give specific attention to the practical entrepreneurial experience. Given that the strategic or policy documents will be disseminated widely and provide direction to the school community on expectations and accountabilities, these documents should a) explain why the practical entrepreneurial experience is being promoted in secondary education, b) provide guidance by way of examples of good practice on the entrepreneurial learning experience; and c) encourage networking and systematic exchange of good practice to allow for scale, innovation and quality improvements.
- ✓ *budgetary support:* examples of budgetary support could include a dedicated innovation budget line where schools or groups of schools cooperating on practical entrepreneurial experience could submit proposals for developments of practical entrepreneurial experience or school-based budget support for entrepreneurial experience.

Evidence of budgetary support should be clearly dedicated to the practical entrepreneurial experience. Evidence that would not satisfy the second bullet of Level 3 is budget line broadly addressing innovation in education (unless it has a dedicated sub-category on the practical entrepreneurial experience) or a school budget line allocated broadly to school-community cooperation (unless it has a dedicated reference to the practical entrepreneurial experience).

Level 4

To achieve a level 4, concrete data will be required on the schools and school leavers who have undertaken a practical entrepreneurial learning experience.

The school annual reports submitted to the education ministry ideally should provide data on numbers of students (Bullet 1) having completed the practical entrepreneurial experience. This data will allow for monitoring of the education's specific policy or strategy on the implementation of the provisions for the practical entrepreneurial learning experience. The annual school reports will also allow for monitoring how schools are implementing the practical entrepreneurial learning experience (Bullet 2).

Level 5

A level 5 requires that all school leavers would have undertaken a practical entrepreneurial learning experience. As with level 4, this data is most likely to be captured through school-based data submitted with each schools annual reporting exercise. The assembly and analysis of the data at national level would provide the detail necessary to meet the requirements of Level 5.

Vocational Education and Training

1.13: Indicator: Entrepreneurship Promotion in Vocational Education and Training

Rationale

Embedding entrepreneurship skills within broader vocational education and training enhances the career prospects of trainees and particularly prepares VET graduates for self-employment and small business creation.

Objective

The purpose of systematically upgrading vocational education and training courses with entrepreneurship skills consistently is to generate a more developed entrepreneurial and employable economy.

Note 1: Vocational education and training refers to both school-based VET as well as post-secondary vocational education and training provision. VET providers are those that are accredited by the national authorities. These can be both public and private training providers.

Note 2: Separate bullets within this indicator requires evidence of two sorts with VET developments at policy and delivery levels: a) entrepreneurship in VET and b) entrepreneurship-specific career guidance. Both evidence requirements are necessary.

Level 1

A level 1 on this indicator reflects a policy situation where there is no specific policy position or guidance on entrepreneurship promotion within vocational education and training.

Level 2

To score on a level 2 requires evidence both evidence of policy and practice. Firstly, bullet 1 will requires examples of how vocational schools are promoting entrepreneurial learning as well as entrepreneurship-specific career support. Both issues must be addressed within the vocational schools.

Bullet 2 focuses on policy guidance and includes 3 issues to be addressed within the guidelines:

- a) promotion of entrepreneurship skills in VET; and
- b) entrepreneurship career guidance for vocational education and training; and
- c) a tracking system to allow both schools and national authorities to determine career destination of graduates of vocational education and training. A five-year perspective in the tracking system would allow for an understanding on career outcomes of vocational education graduates including those that decide to pursue tertiary education.

Level 3

At level 3, impact from the policy guidance is required on two levels.

Firstly, the percentage of schools (at least 20%) that have adopted the national policy guidelines is required. This information would be available from the vocational school annual reports (upper secondary and post-secondary), assembled and reported at national levels.

A second bullet encourages the national VET authorities to critical track the career paths of vocational graduates and to report on this within a national policy document. Any policy document will be sufficient e.g. education, youth,

employment, economic development. The policy document should include reference to the statistics available on VET graduates career progression (e.g. percentage in employment, unemployed, in further education, self-employed or owner of an enterprise).

Level 4

The first bullet of Level 4 requires more demanding data to demonstrate that at least 60% of all vocational schools (upper secondary and post-secondary) have adopted the national guidelines on entrepreneurship in vocational education and training.

The second bullet encourages the national VET authorities to track the career paths of vocational graduates and to report on career destinations and to evaluate the impact of the country's more developed entrepreneurship-oriented VET system. While evaluation should focus on national data and its implications, evaluation could include qualitative evaluations at VET schools where graduate performance is particularly good to determine which factors specifically could be contributing to better VET graduate performance in areas such as business start-up. This intelligence will help refine existing policy guidance.

Level 5

Level 5 reflects the situation where all accredited VET providers have adopted the national guidelines and represents a major achievement for the country. With this achievement, Level 5 also requires evidence that the country's VET system is a learning reference for other countries on its entrepreneurship-specific policy and practice.

Examples of Bullet 2 evidence are:

- International study visits to the country where the entrepreneurship in VET developments in a key part of the study visit objective and agenda;
- The country's entrepreneurship promotion in VET is highlighted in documentation in other countries' or international publications e.g. education, employment, enterprise policy documents by countries in the region or by international operators e.g. European Commission, World Bank, EBRD, ILO.
- Good practice in entrepreneurship in VET policy shared in conferences, seminars, workshops outside the country. Agenda, conference papers, and power points would be typical evidence here.

Higher Education

Indicator 1.14: Good Practice in Entrepreneurial Learning in Higher Education

Rationale

This indicator looks at the exchange of good practice in entrepreneurial learning as an important factor of increasing the impact of higher education⁸ on national competitiveness, innovative growth and graduate employability. It is one of the three indicators supporting the drive by public and private institutions of higher education to becoming “centres of gravity” for entrepreneurial learning and developing entrepreneurship ecosystems that make exchange of “know-how” part of their normal operation. It is assumed that systemic identification, collection and exchange of good practice, on the one hand, enhances individual and collective capacity of higher education institutions, and – on the other - activates developments at the national policy level.

The term “**system**” stands here for the existence of some form of a proven agreement between the institutions within the national higher education network that includes any or all of the following: principles, procedures or method, according to which good practice on entrepreneurial learning is being exchanged on a regular basis.

In all indicators of the Higher Education indicator battery that require presentation of quantitative data, a % of higher education institutions is calculated out of the total number of all higher academic and vocational education institutions that have programmes leading to (or equal to) the EQF levels 5-8.

This indicator is linked to other Good Practice indicators in the Principle 1 of the SBA policy assessment framework.

Objective

The objective of the indicator is to prompt higher education institutions for bringing exchange of good practice on life-long entrepreneurial learning to the system level.

Level 1

A level 1 means that, while individual cases of exchange practice and know how on entrepreneurial learning in higher education might be found in the country, no evidence of existence of the national **system** of good practice exchange is available. In the absence of a system, exchange of practice may take place on *ad hoc* basis and result from a one-time initiative or – come from an individual project, limited in time and scope.

Level 2

To qualify for a level 2 score, the country needs to demonstrate a concrete example of at least one **platform** (institutional or digital/virtual) for exchanging good practice on entrepreneurial learning that is open to all higher education institutions at a national level.

*The term “**platform**” is applied here in a broader sense – it could be: 1) an **institutional platform**: an organisation, a consortium or a programme/project at higher education level that facilitates regular exchange of good practice on entrepreneurial learning, or b) a **digital platform**: an on-line resource, a virtual collaboration system or its module, that has been created/ adjusted for the purpose of regular exchange of **good practice on entrepreneurial learning in higher education**. The “platform” has to bear a title or a statement of its purpose, mission, etc. clearly referring to all key the elements: “exchange of good practice”, “entrepreneurial (entrepreneurship)” “learning” or “training” or “education” and has to cover (specifically or within a broader scope) a higher education level.*

⁸ For the purpose of this assessment, all three higher education indicators include both academic and vocational programmes at higher education levels that could normally lead to qualifications at EQF levels 5-8.

Among the acceptable evidence could be:

- Printed or electronic examples of good practices exchanged through the platform at any time during the assessment period.
- Printed or electronic documents, platform action plans and/or materials referring to good practice exchange activities, as well as some materials explaining the mission and/or objectives and/or purpose of the platform. The latter should specifically mention exchange of good practice on entrepreneurial learning in higher education,
- The evidence has to be sufficient to demonstrate that all higher education institutions in the country are eligible to join and/or use the platform with no restrictions.

Level 3

To satisfy the criteria of bullet 1 at this level, evidence of cases of **adoption** of at least one national or international good practice on entrepreneurial learning by the domestic higher education institution is required.

“Adoption” here stands for the use of the model earlier applied by (an)other national, or foreign, or international organisation(s). The “adopted” practice could be applied as it is, or modified, or used partially, according to the needs of the home institution.

For satisfying the bullet 2 at the level 3, evidence of participation of not less than 25% of higher education institutions in a **regular exchange** of good practice during the reporting period has to be presented.

“Regular exchange” of good practice means that the respective share of these institutions has been involved (participated, presented, attended, submitted or received electronic or paper information) more than once during the reporting period.

Level 4

- *Bullet 1*

Bullet one of the level 4 requires evidence of at least one domestic practice of entrepreneurial learning in higher education receives an award or another type of a formal international recognition from an international organisation or consortium (institution, network, association, council, board, expert body, etc.).

Evidence may include:

- ✓ A diploma, a certificate, a letter of recognition or alike dated during the reporting period of the SBA assessment.
- ✓ AND: proof of **ownership** of a practice that had been recognized by the domestic institution – documents that explain the process of in-house development and implementation of the practice in question.

- *Bullet 2*

To meet the requirements of bullet 2 of the level 4, evidence of participation of not less than 50% of higher education institutions in the exchange of good practice during the reporting period is required.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ Examples of good practice presentations, discussions, exchange of opinions on practices of entrepreneurial learning in higher education where the abovementioned % of higher education institutions is involved, OR
- ✓ Lists of participants, agendas/programmes of face-to-face or online events and discussions from the abovementioned % of higher education institutions.

Level 5

■ *Bullet 1*

If at least one domestic practice of entrepreneurial learning in higher education has been “borrowed” by a foreign/international peer organisation, it satisfies the requirements under bullet one at level 5.

Evidence could include:

- ✓ A document by a foreign/international organisation that has adopted and implemented a domestic practice of the country of assessment. A title and a description of the borrowed practice needs to be clearly stated in the document.
- ✓ AND: The domestic institution should be able to prove ownership of its practice borrowed by another organisation.

■ *Bullet 2*

To meet the requirements of bullet 2 at the level 5, evidence of participation of not less than 75% of higher education institutions in the exchange of good practice during the reporting period is required.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ Examples of good practice presentations, discussions, exchange of opinions on practices of entrepreneurial learning in higher education where the abovementioned % of higher education institutions is involved, OR
- ✓ Lists of participants, agendas/programmes of face-to-face or online events and discussions from the abovementioned % of higher education institutions.

Indicator 1.15: Higher education cooperation with the world of business

Rationale

The rationale behind this indicator is based on the importance of structured cooperation between higher education institutions and the world of business for job creation, productivity, innovation, and strengthened competitiveness. Such a cooperation enhances entrepreneurial potential of higher education at both institutional and individual levels, and brings new, innovative energy into business development. If implemented at the **system** level, cooperation must involve, along with the education, R&D and business players, also: policy makers, public and private institutional support structures..

Objective

The objective of the indicator is to prompt adoption of policies, institutional measures and development of practice that all ensure structured, sustainable and systemic cooperation of ALL higher education institutions with the world enterprises.

For the purpose of this assessment, the term “**system**” includes at least evidence of the following: availability of principles, procedures and method, as well as infrastructure, dedicated resources, roles, responsibilities, and clearly defined implementation measures.

Level 1

A level 1 is given when no elements of the system of higher education-business cooperation could be identified based on the available evidence. Level 1 is characterized by availability of examples of individual cases of cooperation.

Level 2

■ *Bullet 1*

To satisfy bullet 1 at the level 2, *ad hoc* examples of adopted regulations for higher education-business cooperation support must be presented.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ National or regional government regulation(s) that set measures for support of partnership, cooperation, joint ventures or projects involving higher education institutions and enterprises (including measures and structures/facilities for innovation, R&D and technology transfer and commercialization support), AND
- ✓ Acceptable evidence should cover any aspects of legal, financial, tax, IPR or other regulatory aspects which regulate education-business cooperation.

■ *Bullet 2*

This bullet requires evidence of at least one case of regional and/or sectoral higher education-business cooperation.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ Agreements, memoranda, other documents formalizing cooperation between higher education institutions and enterprises, OR
- ✓ National, regional, local or sectoral strategy, or programme, or project documents where support measures, resources, roles and responsibilities are defined for higher education-business cooperation.

Level 3

■ *Bullet 1*

To satisfy bullet 1, the national-level regulatory-normative document(s) need to be provided that set(s) the basis for further development of a comprehensive national regulatory framework for higher education-business cooperation. The “basic framework” would comprise principles of action, procedures and institutional structures.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ National level decree, regulation, law or another formal decision by a responsible government body.

■ *Bullet 2*

To satisfy bullet 2, level 3, the country needs to provide examples of higher education-business cooperation involving both technology and non-technology cooperation. “***Higher education-business cooperation***” would mean a joint venture, project or cooperation programme that involves one or several higher education institutions AND one or several enterprises. It may (but not required) involve other actors: national or local governments, NGOs, research institutions or business support organisations, etc.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ At least two cases of education-business cooperation agreements, memoranda or other documents: at least **ONE** - in the area of technology-based **AND ANOTHER** – in non-technology-based cooperation, **OR**
- ✓ At least **ONE** case of education-business cooperation involving BOTH technology and non-technology-based types of cooperation within the same example.

Level 4

■ *Bullet 1*

Availability of evidence supporting the establishment of a national ***system*** of promotion of structured higher education-business cooperation would be required under this bullet.

The term “***system***” is defined earlier in this indicator, and at level 3 it should **at least** cover the following: incentives for higher education institutions and enterprises, clearly defined implementation measures and dedicated resources.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ National policy, law or government regulation document OR
- ✓ A national level memorandum, agreement, or similar between the key stakeholders that include government, higher education system representatives (Rectors conference, HE Council, or alike) and business sector, and other players.

■ *Bullet 2*

Evidence must be presented that at least 50% of total number of higher education institutions at the national level have ongoing cooperation agreements (memoranda, agreements, or similar) with enterprises.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ Examples of cooperation documents.

Level 5

Evidence must be presented that at least ALL higher education institutions at the national level have ongoing cooperation agreements (memoranda, agreements, or similar) with enterprises.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ Examples of cooperation documents.

Indicator 1.16: Entrepreneurial Learning in Higher Education

Rationale

The rationale behind this indicator is based on the assumption entrepreneurial learning transforms any higher education institution into an environment where all students, irrespectively of their field of study, have equal access to opportunities for development of their entrepreneurial potential and mind-set, thus contributing to graduate employability and enhancing their contribution into national economic competitiveness. Entrepreneurial learning is equally spread across business- and non-business faculties. Availability of entrepreneurial learning opportunities in non-business faculties represents a major shift from traditional approach - when entrepreneurship is embedded only in business faculties – to a “cross-campus” concept that broaden the notion of entrepreneurial learning and applies a key-competence approach to learning at the higher education level.

Objective

This indicators aims at provision of opportunities to all higher education students in developing entrepreneurship key competence and entrepreneurial mind set, equipping them for future successful professional and social life.

Level 1

A this level no evidence could be provided on existence of “entrepreneurial” institutions of higher education and/or promotion of entrepreneurial learning in non-business and/or nono-technological faculties in higher education institutions.

Level 2

At the level 2, the country is able to demonstrate at least two cases of higher education institutions applying entrepreneurship approaches in non-business and/or non-technological faculties.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ Course programme, curricula of non-business and/or non-technological studies featuring entrepreneursip in at least two institutions of higher education.

Level 3

■ *Bullet 1*

To satisfy bullet 1 at this level, evidence of up to 10% of higher education institutions promoting entrepreneurship in non-business faculties is required.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ Total number of higher education institutions in the national network AND
- ✓ Evidence of availability of teaching entrepreneurship in non-business faculties should be provided for up to 10% of institutions in the national network (at least one course or programme in each of them).

■ *Bullet 2*

To demonstrate compliance with bullet 2 of this level, there needs to be concrete evidence that higher education institutions are involved in the national discussions on life-long entrepreneurial learning strategy/policy with the aim to spread and refine the concept of “entrepreneurial university”/ “entrepreneurial higher education institution”. and provide inputs into the national strategy/policy for life-long entrepreneurial learning.

A **“cross-campus” approach** envisages that entrepreneurship is embedded into the higher education institution’s strategy, core curricula, student course work, teacher development and faculty performance assessment. At the institutions applying this approach, entrepreneurship activity is seen as a source of revenue and a source of inspiration, and entrepreneurship key competence of students is developed step-by-step through the years of study. Minor and/or major degrees in entrepreneurship might be introduced by the higher education institution. Entrepreneurship is part of the student project work, team learning, student start-up and innovation competitions, and it is part of teacher training and faculty performance evaluation. Entrepreneurship is explicitly mentioned in the main statutory documents or the strategy/mission/vision of the higher education institution and this higher education institution has an Entrepreneurship (development, promotion, support) Centre, as well as some infrastructure for innovation support. Finally, a “cross-campus” concept is only implementable if it is supported by the top management of the institution and is equally spread across business- and non-business faculties.

Evidence must be concrete and reflect application of “cross-campus” approach to entrepreneurial learning in higher education. It could include a) a paper or electronic **press article** on a national higher education network event/meeting, OR b) both the **agenda and the participant list** of an event/meeting involving institutions of higher education and where life-long entrepreneurial learning is explicitly mentioned.

Level 4

To satisfy this level, evidence of up to 25% of higher education institutions applying entrepreneurship approaches in non-business faculties is required.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ Total number of higher education institutions in the national network AND
- ✓ Evidence of availability of entrepreneurship curricula and programmes in non-business faculties for not less than 25% of institutions in the national network, AND
- ✓ Entrepreneurship should be present across various years study and student learning activities in these faculties.

Level 5

To satisfy this level, evidence of up to 50% of higher education institutions applying entrepreneurship approaches in non-business faculties is required.

Evidence may include:

- ✓ Total number of higher education institutions in the national network AND
- ✓ Evidence of availability of entrepreneurship curricula and programmes in non-business faculties for not less than 25% of institutions in the national network, AND
- ✓ Entrepreneurship should be present across various years study and student learning activities in these faculties.

SBA Dimension 1: Indicators for Women's Entrepreneurship

(Indicators and guidelines will be provided at a later date)

SBA Dimension 8: Indicators for SME Skills

Context

The objective of the improved skills dimension of SBA in the pre-accession region is to encourage participating countries to establish human resources as a strategic priority in enterprise development set against the 'Copenhagen' competitiveness criterion – an EU accession condition that a country's enterprises need to meet up to the challenges of operating in the EU's open market. More developed human capital in the SME sector will be important in building a more robust SME sector able to compete in EU single market. Training covers both management and regulatory issues, but it also includes occupational or vocational skills which taken together makes for complex training environment comprising a range of policy and training provider stakeholders (public and private) and where cooperation and coordination is important to ensure a comprehensive and cost effective human capital support framework for SMEs.

While training for start-ups, early phase and growth enterprises will differ, the training provider community is similarly diverse but where interfaces in training intelligence, in particularly training needs, and training provision need to be improved. Ensuring training offer meets demand - relevance – stands out a critical factor in the SME human capital drive which along with quality assurance are important in encouraging and convincing cash-strapped SMEs to invest in training.

Enterprise Skills

Indicator 8.1: SME Skills intelligence (TNA)

Rationale

Public and private investment in training is more cost-effective when training offer reflects the specific demands of the market. But weak intelligence on SME skills undermines wider enterprise policy objectives of establishing robust economies and investment in skills. A more system-based approach to building intelligence on SME skills would allow for policy makers to more confidently address the manpower requirements of the economy and to ensure greater efficiency in financial investment in training for SMEs. Simultaneously, the training provider market stands to gain by ensuring that training offer meets the specific demands of businesses, ensuring relevance and effectiveness.

Objective

The skills intelligence indicator is develop a system-based approach to SME manpower intelligence, and to allow for reliable information on skill gaps, skill weaknesses and future skills requirements.

Note: the skills intelligence indicator is a 'driver' indicator for the remaining indicators for the SME skills dimension of the SBA in that, assuming that its provisions are given priority for development and systematic skills intelligence data (including TNA) is made available, progress on the remaining indicators is assured. For this reason the self-assessment and the peer assessment should give specific time and attention to the skills intelligence indicator. Data gathered specifically on TNA will be complimented by wider intelligence on SME skills (i.e. training acquired by enterprises, who funds the training, impact of training)

Level 1

At this level, skills intelligence tracking is mainly undertaken by training providers with no linkages both within sectors or across sectors frustrating any strategic value that the intelligence could serve in terms of policy and delivery. Intelligence is primarily project-based with no efforts to build a 'big picture' on a country's SME training needs or interests.

Level 2

At a level 2, there is evidence that key stakeholder institutions are aware that a more developed intelligence system on SME training is a necessary component in a country's competitiveness drive. And a cross-stakeholder dialogue follows with the range of key players exchanging on key questions like:

- ✓ Why is a coordinated intelligence framework on SME skills important?
- ✓ Who are the essential partners to a future framework? Education, employment, economy ministries, chambers, employer associations, training provider organisations, sector associations, national statistics office, research academy?
- ✓ What types of protocols are necessary to give key stakeholders engaged and committed?
- ✓ What would be the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the range of partners?
- ✓ What conditions are necessary for an intelligence framework to be sustainable (staff, funding for a partnership, information technology)?
- ✓ What specific issues regarding training needs should be included in the wider SME skills intelligence build-up?
- ✓ Is a stock-taking of existing SME skills intelligence necessary?
- ✓ What type of data TNA tools exist and could be adapted to meet new needs?
- ✓ What is a possible architecture for a management system that would work and at what cost? Who would coordinate, assemble, analyse and report on the data?
- ✓ Should priority be given to gathering data on key sectors of the economy as an initial step?
- ✓ What measures would be necessary to build new capacities for data framework (e.g. data quality, analytical capacities, reporting)?
- ✓ What are the certification arrangements for training organisations providing services to and for SMEs?
- ✓ In addition to information on training needs analysis, what wider intelligence on SME training would be particularly useful for national policy developments (e.g. who is financing the training, details on evaluation of training, details on training actually acquired by SMEs, information on training programmes and providers)?

Evidence to satisfy this level could comprise minutes of meetings from cross-stakeholder meetings addressing some of the issues above.

Level 3

This level requires an agreed SME skills policy framework. Evidence of a policy agreement would be an official document signed by head of government or a line ministry.

■ *Bullet 1*

- ✓ requires evidence that a formal agreement has been established between key stakeholders on ways forward for national SME skills intelligence framework to include TNA data;
- ✓ an agreement could be in the form of an inter-agency signed protocol or exchange of letters expressing commitment and should include at least an action plan and division of responsibilities, including recognition of leadership for developments and commitment of resources.
- ✓ Commitment of organizations representing key economic sectors for the country will be an important feature of TNA in the SME skills intelligence framework.

■ *Bullet 2*

- ✓ In addition to an agreed SME skills intelligence policy instrument, evidence of data collection instruments already available are required (e.g. TNA questionnaires, focus group support tools) as well as at least a primary operational data management system.
- ✓ In its most simple form, the data management system would require an agreed data collection responsibilities, a common data assembly point and responsibilities for ensuring data quality.

■ *Bullet 3*

- ✓ requires evidence (possibly through the SME skills intelligence policy framework document) of funding arrangements for SME skills intelligence possibly by way of one line ministry (e.g. ministry of economy) or a national agency (e.g. SME Agency, VET Agency). The support for SME skills intelligence includes TNA.

Level 4

■ *Bullets 1 & 2*

- ✓ requires a national report every 24 months on SME skills and TNA data on at least 3 sectors considered critical for the national economy (e.g. these sectors could be registered as priority areas in the national economic plan) and where SME data clearly differentiates between women-owned and men-owned businesses.
- ✓ The report should be a formal document that prompts policy debate and possibly leading to policy improvements based on intelligence collected and subsequent analysis. It should provide specific recommendations for the training community as follow-up action points.
- ✓ The report, inter alia, could prioritize what needs to be addressed and the most appropriate training methods to be used to meet training needs.

■ *Bullet 3*

- ✓ Details on SME skills intelligence and TNA requirements of key sectors of the national economy should be available on at least one recognized website (e.g. SME agency). A dialogue with the training community (public and private) on the implications of data would allow for training providers to respond particularly to immediate market training needs.

Level 5

■ *Bullet 1*

- ✓ requires concrete examples of how the SME skills intelligence and TNA intelligence has impacted on policy for SME training. For example, a finding from a TNA survey underlined weak digital skills of SMEs undermining access by these SMEs to available on-line training. A policy decision (including funding allocation for a 3-year period) was taken as a response in an inter-ministerial meeting (Minister for Economy and the Minister for Innovation & Digital Society).

■ *Bullet 2*

- ✓ The final requirement of this indicator is that training programmes are developed and implemented in direct response to the SME skills intelligence and TNA-driven policy decisions.

Example of a national TNA framework mechanism

Coordinator: The SME Agency has been mandated to coordinate all data developments on training for SMEs. It also has an annual dedicated budget line for enterprise skills intelligence. Its tasks are to

- ensure an efficient partnership approach to data intelligence on SME skills
- coordinate intelligence inputs from the range of partners
- create and manage a database SME training intelligence
- provide analysis on data and ensure that key stakeholders and other government departments (e.g. national statistics office) are informed of data trends and implications
- report to an cross-stakeholder steering committee on developments and formulate policy proposals for stakeholder institutions to take forward
- provides a periodic analytical report (e.g. every 2 years) on main issues for human capital in key economic sectors within the national economy (e.g. agri-food, banking & financial services, pharmaceuticals)
- dialogue with the education and training community with an objective of ensuring that training providers accommodate the recommendations for training based on the TNA analysis set against short, medium and longer term training needs.
- manage donor round tables for training provisions and in particular the data developed through donor-supported actions

Stakeholders: The SME agency may additionally have its own intelligence sources to feed into the national data system. For example, the agency could have sector focus groups comprising sector training experts to address immediate, medium and longer term requirements for knowledge and skills. This would be particularly important for sectors where regulatory training, for example, is necessary for firms to work within or trade with the EU internal market e.g. food-safety regulations.

Indicator 8.2: Training for Start-Up Firms

Rationale

Start-up training and mentoring encourages new venture creation. Further, training and mentoring impacts on the survival rate of start-ups. The indicator prompts government (through policy) and training providers (through their design and delivery of training) to give renewed consideration to training for start-ups. It also encourages start-up support agencies to specifically close the gap between start-up training and start-up finance. This requires a more developed interface between the training community and banks, as well as other finance support organizations, to maximize the value of investment in start-up training and the success of start-up grants and loans.

Objective

The purpose of this indicator is to encourage government and training providers to strategically develop training and mentoring services for start-ups.

Note: Start-ups refer to those considering starting a business (pre start-ups) and early phase businesses in their first 3 years of operation (start-ups).

Level 1

There is no easily identifiable data or wider intelligence on pre-startup and start-up training.

Level 2

Level 2 requires evidence of a structured discussion involving key stakeholders on ways forward to building systematic data and wider intelligence on training for pre-start-up and start-up training. This dialogue would most likely be initiated by the ministry responsible for SME policy. However, an executive agency responsible for SMEs could lead and facilitate the discussions given its mandate in this area provided by the ministry with policy responsibility. Key partners to the discussion would include other ministries with a training mandate (employment, education) and sector-specific interest ministries also with a training development mandate, relevant executive agencies, training provider associations, National Statistics Office, research organisations (universities working in the area of SME development).

Level 3

A level 3 requires that official data is available on training for both pre-startups and start-ups. Data addressing only one of these areas will not be sufficient to satisfy the demands of the indicator.

- ✓ Pre-start-up training data will be systematically available through the national statistics office if the business registration form has been upgraded to include information on training.
- ✓ Data on training for businesses up to 3 years since registration (start-ups) will be sourced from key training providers and assembled and assessed by one organization (e.g. SME agency) to provide a reliable and comprehensive perspective of training for start-ups.
- ✓ If none of the above is available, a survey of SMEs would capture the data required for the two groups in the SBA assessment. If a survey approach is used, sampling would be an important factor in the assessment. Further, it would be important that the survey method and instrument remain constant to track changes over time.

Example for training for start-ups

After the last SBA assessment in 2011, the ministry responsible for SME policy called a meeting with institute of national statistics, the business registration agency, Chamber of Commerce, SME training providers to determine how data could be improved on training for prestart-ups and start-ups. Issues within the discussions focused on:

- stock-taking of existing intelligence (national and donor-supported), information gaps, existing data collection instruments and quality/relevance of information for policy purposes;
- agreement on how to integrate pre-start-up and start-up training concerns within a wider drive to develop intelligence on SME training (TNA indicator);
- identification of policy interface issues for pre-start-up and start-up training (e.g. policy issues in respect of youth, women's economic empowerment, access to finance, innovation, start-up failure/second chance, business registration);
- financing of pre-start up and start-up and key actors in the SME training support framework (e.g. government, NGOs, banks and other financing sources).

The result of the meeting was an agreement to give priority attention to policy in the business start-up area in firstly, bring coherence to the area by all actors coordinating their knowledge, expertise and intelligence. Secondly, the stakeholders participants at the meeting agreed to co-work data development with three action points as follows

The business registration agency will include an additional question on the business registration form as form as follows:

- Prior to registering your business, have you participated in any form of training (or have you engaged any kind of mentoring support) to help you in preparing to set up your business (e.g. training for a business plan). Please, tick only one box: Yes No
- All stakeholders agreed to track data on training for all start-ups (businesses up to 3 years after registration) and on an annual basis to submit this data to a lead agency responsible for monitoring SME training (see TNA indicator).
- To gather data on public and private investment in start-up training.

Level 4

Level 4 requires hard, reliable data and should be available if the demand of Levels 2 and 3 have been satisfied.

■ *Bullet 1*

Firstly, assuming business registration information now includes information on pre-start-up training, annual data will be available and should capture the percentage of newly registered businesses that have benefited from pre-start-up training. Data to satisfy this bullet will demonstrate that at least 40% of newly registered businesses have had training prior to formal registration of the business.

■ *Bullet 2 & 3*

- ✓ Assuming that a coordinated approach to building intelligence on SME skills is developed (SME skills intelligence indicator), this should provide details on the extent of public budget investment in start-up training (Bullet 2) and where at least 40% of newly registered start-ups have had pre-start training (Bullet 1), and

- ✓ Bullet 3 would require evidence that 10% start-up firms have undertaken training (Bullet 3). It is important that the specific percentage (10%) required for training of start-up firms is provided with the support of public finance.

Level 5

As with level 4, hard data is required to meet the demands of Level 5. The same data sources used for Level 4 assessment would be the most relevant source for evidence for Level 5 with at least 70% newly registered firms having engaged in pre start up training and at least 20% of businesses up to 3 years after registration having engaging training.

It is important that the specific percentage (20%) required for training of start-up firms is provided with the support of public finance.

Indicator 8.3: E-Training

Rationale

Information and communications technology (ICT) are important for SMEs in establishing or more efficient relationships with suppliers and customers contributing to cost reductions and in turn greater competitiveness. ICT also allows for improved production, administration, marketing and increasingly with e-commerce to increased sales. On-line training is an additional factor in that can bring extra value and efficiency to small businesses. However, the training provider communities in the EU pre-accession region have been slow to develop this area specifically for SMEs.

Objective

The objective of this indicator is to build a vibrant e-training environment for SMEs.

Level 1

A Level 1 on this indicator reflects a scenario where e-training services specifically addressing SME interests are significantly under-developed with traditional training methods remaining the predominant training paradigm. Through the assessment no examples of e-training for SMEs have been able to be identified.

Level 2

A level 2 requires that there are examples of e-training available on a register of training programmes on the recognised website. A recognized website is a website that is owned and maintained by an organization in the country and one that SME owners would be aware of e.g. SME Agency, Innovation Agency, VET Agency, Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship Agency, well known training providers. More developed and innovative training providers should be encouraged to look at existing training and determine how the training can be transformed into e-learning method.

Level 3

A level 3 specifically encourages training providers or SME support institutions to establish virtual learning environments made available through on-line platforms. This could include on-line mentoring and self-learning training provision. The bullet requires that e-training modules are available on at least one on-line platform (Bullet 2).

However, Bullet 1 also requires that the on-line platform required to meet the demands of Bullet 1 is interactive i.e. that SME owners and staff are not only able to access e-training but they can also interact with those responsible for the design and improvement of the e-training provision. For example, SME owners could signal training interests directly in an area of the platform. An area of the platform which deals with 'Frequent Asked Questions' and which provides standard answers would not be considered to be an interactive function for the purposes of the indicator.

The assessment should provide the URL link to the platform. If access to the interactive area has restricted access, it would help the assessment if at least one participant at the SBA assessment workshop were available had access to the restricted area to demonstrate the interactive options available on the platform.

Level 4

Building on the previous level of the indicator, Level 4 requires examples of how feedback from SMEs using the e-training on an on-line platform have shared this feedback on e-training programmes and that this has resulted in adjustments to the training available. In this regards, it would be useful if those responsible for managing an e-training programme on platform could participate at the SBA assessment workshop.

The objective of a demanding Bullet 2 of the indicator is that SMEs participate significantly in e-training. The bullet requires that 30% of SMEs have engaged in e-training since the previous SBA assessment. Data to satisfy Bullet 2 could be sourced from the wider SME skills intelligence (see TNA indicator).

Level 5

The final bullet of the e-training indicator requires that 75% of SMEs have engaged in e-training since the previous SBA assessment. Again, data to satisfy Bullet 2 could be sourced from the wider SME skills intelligence (see TNA indicator).

Example

The national SME Agency has established an open, on-line training area on its website. The on-line area contains information and resources related to all aspects of training for SMEs and budding entrepreneurs. It also has dedicated areas specifically for young entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs where networking options are available and direct access to mentors is possible. Both public and private training providers are not only able to use the platform for delivery of training, but the platform allows them to liaise with the SME community a) to identify new training interests and requirements against existing training products for eventual upgrading for e-training format and b) to develop and road-test new e-training services.

To kick-start a more strategic development of e-training through the platform, the SME agency launched an open call to training providers to submit proposals for a) transformation of existing training programmes with high demand (but using traditional training methods) to allow for on-line training provision; and b) new training provision related specifically to SMEs trading (or intending to trade) within the single European market. Priorities within the call included training to support SMEs with the EU regulatory compliance requirements in the areas of food safety and environmental protection, as well as modules on e-commerce specifically tailored to trade with EU partners.

Two years on since the launch of the e-training platform, 20 training providers have registered to deliver their training programmes through the on-line platform. E-training services available include:

- a) an interactive business plan template which prompts aspiring entrepreneurs using the template to revise and improve at each point in the development of the business plan. It also provides concrete examples of good practice to allow business plan better understand the quality requirements of robust business plans. A peer review function linked to a database of entrepreneurs on the website allows for direct contact and questions to be put experienced entrepreneurs;
- b) self-assessment tools for manufacturing SMEs in the textiles sector focusing on reducing water usage and circumventing pollution in the fabric dyeing.

Following some complaints about a number of e-training programmes registered by SMEs on the platform, the SME agency has signed a cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Education to develop quality assurance criteria specifically for e-training services. Given that textiles is the country's key sector, the Agency is also working with the National Association of Textile Manufacturers and the International Association of Textiles and Apparel on e-training and e-mentoring services to for SMEs with an objective of ensuring that the sector meets EU and wider international compliance requirements.

Indicator 8.4: Training for Enterprise Growth

Rationale

Human resource development (HRD) within SMEs contributes to competitiveness and employment. Growth enterprises account for a significant share of job creation and are the principal drivers of national economic competitiveness. Training for growing enterprises therefore is an integral part of a wider support SME support framework.

Objective

The purpose of this indicator is to encourage EU pre-accession countries to give particular consideration to training for companies that already show growth potential.

Note: For the purposes of this indicator a growing company is one which demonstrates at least one of the following characteristics: a) increased turnover year-on-year in the previous 36 months; b) generating new jobs year-on-year in the previous 36 months.

Level 1

There is no evidence of dialogue or planning involving the enterprise world and government. Nor is there any strategic development currently planned for the development of human resources to support training for enterprise growth

Level 2

For a Level 2, the assessment will identify at least 2 training initiatives whose purpose is to support companies with their development objectives that specifically include one or more of the following objectives

- ✓ increased turnover;
- ✓ increased employment (in terms of number of jobs) in the business.

While these initiatives will be strategic at the project level, the defining feature of Level 2 is that the training initiatives are not set within a strategic development context in the country for growing companies. Nonetheless, the initiatives could be used to as good practice to generate inspiration for improved policy in the area (see Level 3, Bullet 1 which follows).

Level 3

■ *Bullet 1*

For a level 3, a policy position on training for enterprise growth should be available. This would comprise an official note from a national ministry and be based on a discussion and agreement with key stakeholders (e.g. employment ministry, science & innovation ministry, training associations). The policy position could be noted in a national strategy document, legislation or in a set of policy guidelines. While each country will have its own specific criteria for growth, the assessment provides two areas (increased turnover, increased employment) that could feature in any country's objectives for business growth. For the purposes of the SBA assessment, at least one of these should feature in the policy position.

■ *Bullet 2*

Evidence of financial support for training for enterprise growth will be necessary to meet the demands of Bullet 2. Examples of evidence could be a) dedicated training budget within a national programme for training specifically focused on growth enterprises, b) Chambers or sector association support for training targeting businesses specifically with business growth objectives, c) donor finance specifically addressing businesses with growth potential. The evidence for Bullet 2 should clearly indicate the organisations in charge of the funding instruments as well as the criteria they apply to enable growing businesses to benefit from the instruments.

Level 4

A Level 4 encourages policy makers to set targets which will prompt the SME community to move towards more growth-oriented developments. To this end, the assessment seeks evidence that at least 15% of SMEs operating for more than 3 years have engaged growth-objective training in the period since that the previous SBA assessment.

This data could be sourced from the data acquired through surveys or the wider SME skills intelligence drive (see indicator on SME Skills Intelligence).

Level 5

- *Bullet 1*

A Level 5 builds on the data on SMEs engaging growth-objective training. A Level 5 seeks evidence that at least 40% of SMEs operating for more than 3 years have engaged growth-objective training in the period since that the previous SBA assessment. Again, this data could be sourced from the data acquired through surveys or the wider SME skills intelligence drive (see indicator on SME Skills Intelligence).

- *Bullet 2*

The final bullet of the indicator works towards tracking impact associated with the training investment. In respect of the 40% of SMEs engaging growth-objective training referred to at Bullet 1, evidence is required that at least half of the companies have demonstrated improvements in a) turnover or b) employment. Data to satisfy this bullet could be sourced from the data acquired through surveys or the wider SME skills intelligence drive (see indicator on SME Skills Intelligence).

Indicator 8.5: Quality Assurance

Rationale

SMEs need to be convinced of the relevance and quality of training before they devote time and money to it. Relevance of training is defined by training needs. Quality of training is demand – SMEs that are convinced of the value and return on investment in training, will continue to upgrade their knowledge and skills. A quality support framework which includes both formal (typically what happens inside the education system) and non-formal training provision (training non subject to formal assessment or examination) is an important feature in the SME skills development drive.

defined by Information and communications technology (ICT) are important for SMEs in establishing or more efficient relationships with suppliers and customers contributing to cost reductions and in turn greater competitiveness. ICT also allows for improved production, administration, marketing and increasingly with e-commerce to increased sales. On-line training is an additional factor in that can bring extra value and efficiency to small businesses. However, the training provider communities in the EU pre-accession region have been slow to develop this area specifically for SMEs.

Objective

The objective of this indicator is that each country establishes a comprehensive quality assurance framework to meet SME training interests.

Note: While a single quality assurance system may not comprehensively address all vocational and managerial skills and competences of SMEs, the enterprise community should be aware of different quality assurance options which may include a national quality assurance framework for education and training (usually overseen by an national education ministry), sector-specific quality assurance for training provided by professional associations as well as quality assurance provided by usually private, international bodies.

Level 1

A Level 1 on the quality assurance indicator reflects a scenario where there no national policy framework for quality assurance of training services delivered to the SME community.

Level 2

• *Bullet 1*

Scoring on Bullet 1 of Level 2 demonstrates that there a number of quality assurance options available for SME training but there is no joined-up mechanism in place which allows SMEs or the training community to understand and get access the range of quality assurance services available. For example, a national quality assurance system overseen by the education ministry accredits universities that provide project management training to SMEs as does the Institute for Programme Management, an international centre of excellence with affiliates based across Europe. However, there is no sign-posting arrangements that would direct SMEs or training providers to the quality assurance bodies.

• *Bullet 2*

To satisfy the second bullet of Level 2, the assessment should demonstrate that government, training organizations and SME support organizations have engaged in discussions as to how quality assurance for SME training can be better understood by the SME community and addressed by the training community. This would include agreement on how the recognition and accreditation of training organizations (public and private) could be established.

An example of one issue to be included in the agreement could be where training providers accredited by international bodies could be immediately recognized for the purposes of SME training following the opinion of a group of training experts.

An example of this dialogue on setting up a framework for SME training would involve, inter alia:

- ✓ quality assurance directorate of the education ministry;
- ✓ training department of the labour ministry;
- ✓ association of private training providers;
- ✓ national VET agency;

- ✓ representatives of well-established, private training operators (e.g. accountancy/finance management, procurement) which provide quality assurance to their training offer;
- ✓ representatives from the sector associations providing quality assurance in training for their specialized fields (vintners association).

Level 3

A level 3 requires evidence that government, key SME support organisations, sector interest groups and training providers have agreed a framework approach to quality assuring training on offer to SMEs. This would include the formal quality assurance system led by the education authorities usually and a mechanism to recognise how training providers outside the formal quality assurance system (sector-specific training organisations, affiliates of international accreditation bodies) could be given an accreditation status.

An institution should be identified responsible for a) coordinating and supporting the accreditation of training providers over and beyond the formal quality assurance framework and ensuring complementarity; and b) issuing framework training standards for SME training services. A national association of training providers would be an important partner and support institution in this process.

Level 4

A level 4 will require information on the numbers of training providers providing services to and for SMEs (e.g. VET institutions, universities, private training companies, sectoral associations, training associations with a specific training function) that are certified. Assuming that the SME skills intelligence (see guidelines for SME skills intelligence indicator) includes information on accredited training providers, the information for both Level 4 bullets (percentage of certified training providers and a database with details on the certified training providers) should be available to meet the demands of this indicator.

Level 5

- *Bullet 1*

Building on data requirements of Level 4, a level 5 requires at least 50% of training providers to have been certified. Again, if the SME skills intelligence includes information on accredited training providers, data will be available to support the assessment of this bullet.

- *Bullet 2*

The second bullet provides an opportunity for SMEs to provide feedback on training. A database of certified training providers should be available possibly hosted and managed by the SME agency or other training support organization. This bullet provides a proxy quality assurance feature in the overall process in that SMEs, through their feedback, can provide recommendations to fellow SMEs on which training providers deliver good services. Training providers should also be able to respond to negative feedback. Hence, the database should have an open and interactive function.

Indicator 8.6: Training for Internationalisation of SMEs

Rationale

Supporting SMEs in accessing international markets improves competitiveness, wealth and jobs. With all EU – pre-accession countries preparing to trade within the EU Single Market, more concerted efforts are required to boost enterprise performance and capacity to withstand the competitive pressures of the internal market. Training has an important role to play in supporting the internationalization of SMEs.

Objective

The objective of this indicator is to boost SME enterprise operations through enhanced knowledge and skills for trading internationally.

Note: For the purposes of this indicator trade missions, international trade fairs or advice & consultancy services do not satisfy the training requirements of the indicator unless they have a specific and clearly articulated learning outcome. Also networking as an activity is not recognised as a training activity unless it has a specific and measurable learning outcome.

Level 1

A Level 1 reflects a scenario where there is no information available for the assessment on training programmes to support SMEs either working or intending to work outside their countries.

Level 2

Bullet 1

A Level 2 demonstrates that there are examples of training programmes to support SME internationalization without a clear policy context. These could include regulatory training for specific sectors (e.g. agri-food) trading with the EU or applied language training for new markets (e.g. how to negotiate a deal and finalise a commercial contract with Chinese customers). Trade fairs are not training events but are information and networking events and would therefore not be sufficient evidence for the indicator.

Bullet 2

SMEs keen on building up their international profile will need to have ready access to information on working internationally and this should include training available. The training information could be centralized within a recognised website (SME agency or international section of a Ministry of Economy or Ministry for Trade) or it could be sign posted from a general website with hyperlinks to specific training provider organisations. If the latter, this would already satisfy Level 3, Bullet 2 assuming that the training provision includes examples of training for SMEs on e-commerce.

Level 3

Bullet 1

A level 3 requires that a policy position has been taken on training for internationalisation of SMEs backed up with dedicated funding commitments. An SME-related policy could be a) training guidelines for international trade, b) SME strategy which has a specific provision for upgrading training for SME exports; c) an national EU integration strategy which gives particular mention to SMEs and the EU single market, including training requirements.

Bullet 2

See information on website information for Bullet 1 related to information on training programmes. Not that the e-commerce feature of the bullet must be satisfied. Example of such training could be a) how to develop on-line invoicing and execute and receive on-line payments, and b) on-line management of customer relations for SMEs in the textile sector.

Level 4

- *Bullet 1*

This bullet requires evidence that the training providers have already upgraded their training programmes to an on-line access. What is important here is that on-line training provision specifically reflects the key sectors of the national economy that feature in a national development plan or national economic strategy. For example, the Chamber of Commerce has a series of short courses on 'Widening your transport business to customer in the European Union'. These sessions have now been revised and are available on-line with a) short presentations by experts, b) case studies on how SMEs can get quicker and efficient access to markets in EU countries, c) a self-planning template of action points to support the SME learner in developing an EU business extension plan.

- *Bullet 2*

The data requirements for this bullet ideally would be available from the SME Skills Intelligence system which would capture training activity for SMEs in key economic sectors.

Level 5

- *Bullet 1*

Again, building on the data requirements for Level 4, the data requirements for this bullet ideally would be available from the SME Skills Intelligence system capturing training activity for SMEs in key economic sectors as defined within a national economic strategy, a national development plan or similar high-level strategic policy document. At this level, at least 30% of SMEs operating in key economic sectors have engaged training which will help with the internationalization of their business. This can be regulatory training, training related to improvement of products/services or key competence training e.g. use of foreign languages to support the company's internationalization efforts.

- *Bullet 2*

This bullet requires evidence of impact: those companies that have engaged training in the country's key economic sectors specifically addressing internationalisation interests have extended or increased their activities in international markets. The extension (new international activities) or increase (widened international activities) in SME operation could include a) access to a new market and resulting sales, b) cooperation with international partners on product and/or market improvements through the European Enterprise Network, c) SME cooperating on technological research with universities or other enterprises from other countries.