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PROMISING
PRACTICES



Tknika: Entrepreneurial Culture (Ikasenpresa)

UNESCO-UNEVOC Promising Practice in Focus 2019

Context

The Basque Country has successfully led its economic recovery

The Basque Country is an Autonomous Community in northern Spain. It has long been characterized by great economic dynamism, linked to the development of industry and industry-related services.¹ However, the economic crisis of the late 80s and 90s forced the region to adapt its activities to confront new challenges.

Entrepreneurship became a valuable component during the process of economic recovery and within the last two decades, the promotion of entrepreneurship has become one of the regional government's main priorities. The Basque Country holds a distinct status as an old industrial region that has successfully met global economic challenges. It has been lauded by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as a success story of regional innovation.²

Integrating entrepreneurship into the school curriculum

In 2005, the Basque Country developed an integrated school curriculum, focusing on the development of social, personal, and professional life skills, particularly those associated with the entrepreneurial mindset and behaviour.

The curriculum outlined a compulsory "Business and Entrepreneurial Initiative" module for all vocational education and training (VET) students. As teachers were expected to implement the integrated curriculum and foster the development of the entrepreneurial culture of their students, they required support via materials and methodologies. The Basque Centre of Research and Applied Innovation in VET (TKNIKA) responded by developing the Empresa Joven Europea (EJE) programme in 2005, followed by the launch of Ikasempresa in 2012. Ikasempresa helps teachers to better build their "business and entrepreneurial initiative" module, by providing them with learning materials, hosting annual events such as the Ikasempresa fair, and facilitating peer learning.

Promoting entrepreneurship remains one of the region's strategic priorities

The integrated curriculum is currently reinforced by the V Basque Vocational Training Plan for 2019–2021,³ which focuses on Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the context of the 4th Industrial Revolution. One of the courses of action outlined in the plan is the encouragement of a culture of entrepreneurship amongst teachers and students to change attitudes and develop competences that are more in line with the reality of modern and future society.

1 Azanza, G., Campos, J., Moriano, J., 2013. Entrepreneurial Intention and Values in the Basque Country <https://www.bizkailab.deusto.es/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Entrepreneurial-Intention-and-Values-in-the-Basque-Country.pdf>

2 OECD Reviews of Regional Innovation: Basque Country, Spain 2011 https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/urban-rural-and-regional-development/oecd-reviews-of-regional-innovation-basque-country-spain-2011_9789264097377-en

3 V Basque Vocational Training Plan 2019–2021 http://www.euskadi.eus/contenidos/informacion/fpgeneral/es_def/adjuntos/V-PLAN-FP-ENG.pdf

Overview

Implemented by: Basque Centre of Research and Applied Innovation in VET (TKNIKA)

Where: The Basque Country, Spain

Themes: Entrepreneurial learning; Youth employment

Funding: Government-funded

Status: Active since 2012

TKNIKA is a centre established by the Basque Deputy Ministry of Vocational Education and Training to promote innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship in vocational education and training (VET) centres across the region. As part of its mandate, Tknika developed the Ikasempresa programme.

Ikasempresa offers an approach focused on the creation of school companies in the classroom. Throughout the learning process, students develop the technical skills and business acumen to become entrepreneurs. They are trained to be dedicated professionals who are either employable or actively entrepreneurial in the face of a changing, unstable labour market.



| Ikasempresa Fair



| Teacher training on the business canvas model

The initiative and its impact

Goal of the initiative

Ikasenpresa aims to foster the entrepreneurial spirit amongst TVET students within the Basque Country by providing all teachers with the necessary tools to assume a facilitator role. The project offers a successful approach to the business world with a clear focus on the development of entrepreneurial skills, including creativity, innovation, teamwork, decision-making, initiative, leadership, commitment, determination, and negotiation.

Description of the initiative

Ikasenpresa creates an innovative educational context and uses a practical learning methodology that includes the management of new technologies, work tools, and communication.

The practical learning methodology forces students to leave their comfort zone and handle situations or problems that they will face in the labour market. Furthermore, the programme helps teachers to better manage the “Business and Entrepreneurial Initiative” module, by providing them with teaching support and a framework.

Over the course of the training programme, students create a small company in which they carry out all business-related activities, such as designing a corporate image, administration, marketing, and buying and selling.

Core building blocks of the programme include:

- Creating a start-up as a learning tool;
- Developing students’ skills to prepare them for employment;
- Presenting entrepreneurship as a viable option

Impact

- TKNIKA has seen an annual increase in the number of VET centres participating in the programme, as well as the number of “mini-companies” established.
- The Ikasenpresa model has been successfully implemented by all VET providers in the Basque Country and is currently being replicated in Chile.
- In the 2018/2019 school year, there are 210 teachers from 81 TVET Centres taking part in the Ikasenpresa programme, with the involvement of more than 5,000 students. They created 890 student companies that were active between September 2018 and February 2019.
- More than 99% of teachers and 79% of students surveyed in the academic year 2018-2019 said that they would recommend the Ikasenpresa programme.

SCHOOL YEAR	VET SCHOOLS INVOLVED	STUDENT COMPANIES CREATED
05-06	5	7
06-07	21	34
...
15-16	53	420
16-17	73	630
17-18	78	823
18-19	81	890

| Evolution of the Ikasenpresa Programme

Insights

TKNIKA builds a close connection with teachers

The lines of communication with teachers are kept open all year round and Tknika regularly shares updates with teachers via email. Teachers are also encouraged to exchange useful information with their peers in an effort to strengthen internal communication and network cooperation.

These links allow teachers to provide constant feedback about the programme. In turn, the feedback mechanism enables Tknika to support teachers who are experiencing difficulties. Teachers of all levels of experience also undergo training sessions at the beginning and at the end of the school year.

Students are encouraged to interact across disciplines and schools

Ikasenpresa facilitates cross-school cooperation where students from different centres gather together to work on soft skills. Through lectures, group discussions and teamwork, students from different backgrounds exchange their experiences, gain knowledge about useful skills, and work together to put it into practice. This gives students the opportunity to interact with those from different VET centres and learn about the diverse ways one can be involved in a business.

Students take the lead in developing business ideas

The students are the protagonists and the teachers act as facilitators. To reinforce the point that students are expected to take the lead, there is a break from the traditional classroom model. On the first day, when students sit at their tables in the classroom as they have always done, they are asked to put the tables aside and sit in a circle. When the teacher sits down with them at the same level, they immediately realize that the learning process will be different.

Ikasenpresa provides freedom to teachers while providing a viable framework

Ikasenpresa builds on existing practices in VET and seeks to act as the last piece of the puzzle. It adapts and learns from what has already been practiced. The programme encompasses teaching modules, career guidance, and entrepreneurial initiatives.

In the Ikasenpresa learning package, rather than simple pedagogical instruction, the rationale behind each topic is provided. By fully understanding the rationale, the teacher can decide which part should be addressed and which part can be skipped according to the different capabilities of students. This allows teachers to adjust their teaching styles whilst following a standard outline.

Looking to the Future

Every school year, there is a process to update and improve material. These changes are in line with labour market needs and strive to incorporate suggestions from teachers currently engaged in the programme. Direct feedback from teachers has led to the progressive development of strategies to ensure the quality of Ikasenpresa is maintained.

As outlined in its current vocational training plan, the Basque Country aims to become the European benchmark for an integrated entrepreneurship curriculum in VET institutions.

Learn more

Inge Gorostiaga, Manager of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at TKNIKA, helped to compile this document. For more information, you can contact her at igorostiaga@tknika.eus. To learn more about Tknika, a UNEVOC Centre, visit <https://tknika.eus/en/>

Discover other promising practices

The UNESCO-UNEVOC Promising Practices database presents inspiring projects tackling key themes in TVET, such as Gender equality, Youth employment, Greening, Digitalization and more.

Learn more on our website at:
<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/promisingpractices>

Questions or suggestions? Contact our team at:
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Further references

Tknika Ikasenpresa <https://tknika.eus/en/cont/proyectos/entrepreneurial-culture-ikasenpresa-programme/#>

Ekingune: Entrepreneurship Community of Vocational Training in the Basque Country <https://ekingune.tknika.eus/en/>

Ikasenpresa Methodology <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6jBMEWuHpo&t=80s>

