Exploring the Landscape for Entrepreneurship Education

Diana Pauna and Maija Kale

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to provide an overview of approaches EU member states apply in designing entrepreneurship education in higher education at the national level and more specifically explore the case of Latvia. The literature reviewed focuses on the policy context and the application of top-down and bottom-up approaches. This study applies a qualitative method of focus group interviews with key stakeholders in Latvia. Research results reveal that policy implementation using a top-down approach is more efficient and easier to monitor while communication and coordination are essential in policy implementation both in top-down and bottom-up approaches.

Keywords: *policy approaches to entrepreneurship education; top-down; bottom-up*

Introduction

This chapter is an important contribution to the anthology on TEACHING AND LEARNING ENTREPRENERUSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION because it addresses the still existing ambiguity about entrepreneurship education. The ambiguity lies in the fact of whether entrepreneurship education is perceived and approached as a specific discipline of social sciences or if it is implemented across the curriculum. When reading this chapter, you will gain the three following insights: 1) reflection on the main approaches to the implementation of policy on entrepreneurship education; 2) an overview of top-down and bottom-up policy approaches to entrepreneurship education in the European Union; 3) a description of how top-down and bottom-up approaches influence entrepreneurship in higher education.

Entrepreneurship education in higher educational institutions has been steadily addressed in the European Union [EU] policy documents for a decade and more profoundly during the last five years (Building Entrepreneurial Mindsets and Skills in the EU, EC 2012; Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe: National Strategies, Curricula, and Learning Outcomes, EURYDICE, 2012; Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan, EC

2013). While the EU institutions provide a policy framework, general guidelines and an action plan (EC-OECD, 2012) at the supranational level, it is in the hands of national governments to decide on the policy framework for entrepreneurship education at the national levels. In response to these policy initiatives at the supranational level, we explore* the policy approaches EU member states apply in designing entrepreneurship education at the national level. By choosing Latvia as a context for study, we aim to contribute to understanding of how countries *"at an early stage of development in terms of entrepreneurship"* develop their priorities and allocate scarce resources with regard to entrepreneurship education (UNCTAD, 2010:4).

The policy context for entrepreneurship education includes the general policy climate and the role of government (Hoppe, 2016; Pittaway & Cope, 2006) that are interrelated with economic, political and cultural contexts (Valerio *et al.,* 2014; Welter *et al.,* 2011). Based on these contextual factors, an institutional framework is developed to provide laws and rules as the key to efficiency and sustainability (North, 1990). Overall, the EU documents on entrepreneurship education state what to be changed, but there is very little guidance on how such changes should be implemented. Similarly, there is lack of academic research on policy initiatives promoting entrepreneurship education (Pittaway & Cope, 2006) and supporting educators. Therefore, we attempt to fill this gap by searching for answers to the following questions:

1) What policy approaches are applied to developing entrepreneurship education at higher educational institutions in the EU?

2) What actions have been taken to achieve policy objectives stated in the current policies on entrepreneurship education?

Approaches of Policy Implementation

The literature review on policy implementation in education offers a broad range of theoretical approaches. Given the focus of this study and the research produced by the authors of other chapters included in this anthology, in this section we explore the top-down and bottom-up approaches and their application for implementing a policy change with a focus on entrepreneurship education. The top-down and bottom-up approaches explain different roles of policy designers and stakeholders and their interaction at different levels.

A top-down approach calls for a governmental policy with clear objectives and a legal structure for the policy implementation. While this approach provides for consistency across the country, it has been criticized for being too administrative, ignoring the local contextual factors (Graham, 2014; Hoppe, 2016). On the contrary, a bottom-up approach places responsibility in the hands of higher education institutions (Matland,

1995:148) and local/regional community to learn about their goals and strategies, and the identified local network is further engaged in the policy planning and implementation process of governmental and non-governmental programmes. Based on the decision making models, Matland (1995) identifies the policy conflict and policy ambiguity as the key determinants of four policy implementation paradigms. Within this framework, the top-down approach is characterized by a low level of political conflict and low ambiguity because of clear policy goals and a structured implementation process; the bottom-up approach functions under high ambiguity and low conflict (Table 1).

Determinant	Top-down	Bottom-up
Level	Macro	Micro
Actors	Policy designers	Local target audience
Features	Prescriptive	Descriptive
Goals	Clear and consistent	Ambiguous

Table 1: Main features of top-down and bottom-up approaches. Source: Cerna, L. (2013:17-19).

Several researchers have referred to top-down and bottom-up approaches (Shattock, 2003; Hoffmann, Vibholt, & Larsen, 2008; Graham, 2014). The interpretation of the top-down approach differs in relation to the level and actors engaged. Within a European context, the top-down approach refers to the government intervention in producing and implementing a policy change (Shattock, 2003, Hoffmann, Vibholt, & Larsen, 2008, Hoppe, 2016) while Fadel, Mojaddidi & Ashri in Chapter 10 apply the top-down approach by looking at the university at a macro level with university governance being the actors. The authors make reference to Graham (2014) who in her research covers universities in Europe, the United States, and Russia, and she, indeed, uses two macro levels of the top-down approach with reference to governments when analysing the case in Finland and to universities in the case study of the United States. Graham also shows that both top-down and bottom-up approaches are possible, however, with governments pushing economic growth, strengthening the role of the government may influence the implementation approach of entrepreneurship education by dealing with obstacles and creating a direction and structure that can be developed through further planning periods. Rinne and Koivula (2005) indicate that top-down policies should be viewed also through "cumulative change" by following up the new modes of action (Rinne & Koivula, 2005:105). In their study both researchers refer to Shattock (2003) to highlight the importance of bottom-up initiatives, indicating to the potential of a combined top-down and bottom-up approach.

Specific or Incorporated Strategies?
In the EU, entrepreneurship education is driven by two groups of institutions: national governments, and regional/local governments.

Depending on the economic, political and cultural context, the EU member states have chosen different pathways when integrating entrepreneurship education in their national strategies. The literature reviewed (Anderson *et al.*, 2014; Chiu, 2012; EURYDICE, 2012; Hoppe, 2016; OECD, 2008; UNCTAD, 2010, 2012) and national reports of the selected countries, show four different approaches to integrating entrepreneurship education in national policy documents:

    1) launch a specific national strategy for entrepreneurship education;
    2) embed entrepreneurship education into other national strategies;
    3) encourage regional initiatives aimed at specific local needs;
    4) support individual university initiatives.

Based on the secondary research and literature review, the findings are summarized in Table 2, followed by an overview of each of four approaches.

Top-Down	Bottom-Up
Specific national strategies aimed at entrepreneurship education: • Denmark • Finland • Norway • Sweden	Regional initiatives related to entrepreneurship education: • Germany • France • Spain • United Kingdom
Other national strategies with entrepreneurship education being incorporated: • Bulgaria • Czech Republic • Hungary • Poland	Individual university initiatives related to entrepreneurship education: • University of Munich in Germany ESPCI ParisTech in France • INSEAD in France • the National Centre for Entrepreneurship in Education (NCEE) in the UK

Table 2: Different policy approaches to entrepreneurship education in the EU. Source: EURYDICE (2012:7-11).

Top-Down Approach

Specific national strategies aimed at developing entrepreneurship education, including in the higher education context, have been developed in Nordic countries. With the exception of Sweden where the policy on entrepreneurship education is implemented through general education (Hoppe, 2016), the governments of Denmark, Finland, and Norway have supported the advancement of entrepreneurship education at all levels, by setting up a national regulatory framework and thereby providing a clear direction for the coherent development of entrepreneurship education nationwide. In each context, the ministry in charge of education played a significant role, and the government intervention applied in these four EU member states and Norway was based on the cooperation between the

ministries and other stakeholders. For example, developing the policy in Finland involved 16 external organizations, including representatives from universities, non-governmental organizations, local governments and professional associations working together. The Norwegian experience involved three ministries - the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Each ministry took responsibility of a total of 14 specific measures which were presented in the Action Plan 2009 – 2014. By introducing the first strategic plan for entrepreneurship education in 2004 (MERN, 2014), Norway is recognized as being the most experienced country among the EU countries in terms of entrepreneurship education policy .

Many countries have opted for embedding entrepreneurship education in different national strategies such as in general education, lifelong learning, youth strategies, and growth strategies. For example, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland have included entrepreneurship as one of the key competencies in lifelong learning strategies (EURYDICE, 2012:7-9). Latvia has also adopted this strategy by incorporating entrepreneurship education in general education, higher education, lifelong learning and youth strategies (reference here?).

Bottom-up Approach

Regional initiatives on entrepreneurship education, originating from the local community and aiming at specific local needs are seen in countries of a larger size that have a stronger federal government, for example in Germany, France, Spain, and the United Kingdom (Anderson *et al.*, 2014). Regional activity in promoting entrepreneurship education at universities ranges from regional policy documents, for example, 'Determined to Succeed' developed by the Scottish government for the period of 2008-2011 (SG, 2008) to financial interventions and support from the local community of entrepreneurs that is practiced in all countries.

Individual university initiatives related to entrepreneurship education set good practice models for other universities, and such universities can become instrumental in developing broader strategies either in the region or nationwide. A number of individual universities have become champions in entrepreneurship education (NIRAS Consultants *et al.*, 2008) either due to the commitment by the university management, for example at the Technical University of Munich in Germany and ESPCI ParisTech in France, or committed individuals as at INSEAD in France.

Combined Top-down and Bottom-up Approach

With entrepreneurship being among top priorities in national policy documents that are owned by a number of national agencies, increasingly evidence shows cases of a combined approach that each draw on their strengths. In Chapter 5 Ludewig describes the importance of the government program EXIST in Germany that has provided support to entrepreneurial activities including education since 1998 that in combination with federal support indicates to differentiating between implementation strategies (Cerna, 2013). Further, Fadel, Mojaddidi & Ashri in Chapter 10 describe how governmental programmes, regional programmes, NGOs and universities interact in providing entrepreneurshp education, hence bringing together the top-down and bottom-up approaches in Saudi Arabia. The policy implementation approaches differ within a country and across countries. The research done by the authors of this anthology suggests that the policy implementation differs also across depending on the goals or intent of a policy.

Case Study: Latvia

In Latvia three ministries and two governmental institutions are responsible for entrepreneurship education. The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the content of entrepreneurship education programmes, the Ministry of Economics provides for lifelong learning projects, and the Ministry of Welfare provides training for the unemployed. While the Latvian Investment and Development Agency provides financial support to universities through various funding programs, the Council of Higher Education develops a national higher education strategy, and the Ministry of Education and Science provides the regulatory framework.

A literature review of entrepreneurship education programmes in higher education in Latvia indicates deficiencies and improvements to be made in the general policy context, university context, programme context, and graduate employability. Over the last decade, the country statistics have improved, especially regarding early stage entrepreneurship as indicated in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor reports on Latvia (Krumina & Paalzow 2012, 2013/2014; Krumina & Rastrigina, 2010). However, in the same reports, reference is made to improvements in the quality of providing entrepreneurship education that echo other strategic assessment reports and recommendations for Latvia, for example, the Latvia Competitiveness Report, Europe 2020: Country-Specific Recommendations for Latvia and most recently recommendation made by the World Bank in "Assessment of Current Funding Model's 'Strategic Fit' with Higher Education Policy Objectives" to increase the quality of higher education, strengthen the links between universities and business, and enhance technology, innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.

In order to explore the policy climate for entrepreneurial education in higher education in Latvia and answer the proposed questions, we drew on the analysis of literature on entrepreneurship education and policy implementation research, national policy papers and institutional websites, focusing on policy guidelines and implementation of entrepreneurship education in EU member states and Norway. Secondary research was complemented with the focus group interviews in Latvia. Key stakeholders (Table 3) in entrepreneurship education were invited to three focus group discussions, in total engaging 17 participants.

We classified focus-group questions into two large groups: the present outcomes of entrepreneurship education and the interaction between stakeholders to establish an agenda for entrepreneurship education in Latvia. Using the sequential exploratory pattern (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007), we accomplished data analysis by processing (NViVo v.10) the material recorded during focus group discussions, followed by coding the transcribed material into thematic categories, reducing the data to key concepts (Hennink, 2013).

Ministries	Ministry of Economics Ministry of Education and Science
Governmental Institutions	National Centre for Education The State Education Development Agency National Industry Experts Council Investment and Development Agency of Latvia
Universities	Vidzeme University College Turiba University College
NGOs, Local Leaders	Junior Achievement Latvia TechHub Riga Mission Possible Riga Go Beyond Adviser to PM on economic matters Entrepreneur and entrepreneurship teacher

Table 3: Stakeholders in the focus group interviews.

The focus group discussions were structured around two blocks of questions to review the present outcomes of entrepreneurship education at university level and the interaction between the government, university and business in order to make projections about areas for improvement in the future. In this section we highlight the major themes and subthemes complemented with a range of opinions expressed during these discussions.

Theme 1 Varied interpretations of entrepreneurship education
Even though the definition of entrepreneurship education was explained in writing in letters inviting participants to the focus group discussions and reinforced during the introductory part of each focus group discussion, a substantial amount of time in discussions was spent revisiting the concepts of education "about" and "for" entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship education for undergraduate or graduate students

The discussions ranged from a respondent stating that there should be no entrepreneurship in undergraduate programmes, to the majority of respondents supporting entrepreneurship being taught in some way to students at all education levels. An underlying argument explaining these differences as perceived by the respondents was the importance of experience in understanding entrepreneurship. Two respondents representing business argued for entrepreneurship being taught to graduate students as being better targeted: *"I think that it is more reasonable to teach entrepreneurship to graduate students. Such students have acquired a profession, they have some working experience, they understand what real business is all about, and then they are ready for additional learning and knowledge helpful in setting up business."(is there a code or key to who said this?)*

Four respondents referred to undergraduates, focusing on their discipline-specific studies to understand the subject specific area first, be it biology, chemistry, or engineering and later add entrepreneurship. Five respondents, however, highlighted the importance of gaining insights in entrepreneurship as early as possible. Eight respondents indicated that studies at universities were too theoretical. The discussion on the above alternatives concluded in accord that students at all levels and in all professions need more entrepreneurial skills and exposure to real life work experiences.

Education "about" and "for" entrepreneurship

In terms of education "for" entrepreneurship it was broadly agreed that students at all levels and professions should develop an entrepreneurial mind-set and a skill set that would allow students after graduation to become either entrepreneurs, self-employed or entrepreneurial employees. Several participants mentioned that entrepreneurship should be integrated across the study programme. In relation to education "about" entrepreneurship participants mentioned three alternatives: a core foundation course, an elective foundation course, and work experience(?) with business incubators and mentors. The majority of respondents agreed on a foundation course in entrepreneurship as a necessary course for students in all study programmes: *"We should teach very practical things; and this is what we do – we teach practical and applied things based on an underlying assumption that students should master a general skill set to be applied in different contexts, including entrepreneurship"*.

A few participants mentioned business incubators as perfect places for combining both education "about" and "for" entrepreneurship. A respondent provided an example of *Demola Latvia* – a university-business interface facilitating multidisciplinary teams of students to work on co-creation projects between university students and companies for which

students and their faculty advisors were awarded credit points. A respondent from a regional university college mentioned a new initiative to engage with the local business community and bring their problems the university laboratory to be solved by students.

Theme 2 Differences in perceptions about internship requirements in academic and professional programmes

All participants recognized the importance of internships in the related study area as an essential component in study programmes to expose students to a real working environment. A number of issues, however, were identified in relation to formal requirements in professional and academic programmes and the institutional framework for employers. In relation to professional study programmes, all participants were aware of internship being a mandatory component both at undergraduate and graduate levels. The discussion about internships in academic programmes was reflective of two problem areas relating to deficiencies in the institutional framework. Respondents from ministries and governmental agencies noted that internship was not required for students studying in academic programmes according to the regulations on higher education. Based on the current regulations, a respondent from the ministry stated: *"If we want to have entrepreneurs, then we have to create professional study programmes where internship is a mandatory component and would put students into real working environment"*.

Three respondents were aware of internships being offered to students in academic programmes however, they did not know how these internships were formalized within those universities. Several participants mentioned that the labour market needs a qualified workforce irrespective of the academic or professional programme. A respondent from a sectoral council indicated a gap between professional and academic programmes: *"I think that in real life we need both, let us say academic and professional "50 to 50" or "60 to 40" depending on the sector, and then something good will come out. Currently I have a feeling that the ones work in one silo and the other ones are in a different silo. We should put them together"*.

Discussions about internships indicated uncertainties and therefore substantial deficiencies in the legal framework for employers providing internships. A representative from the ministry mentioned two approaches applied; employers offer students either o a job agreement or a specific internship agreement for an internship period. Several issues were mentioned in relation to internships and employers, including the extra time spent to supervise an intern and lack of efficiency, perceived as slowing down the regular work within the company. Different opinions expressed by participants from ministries and governmental agencies indicated the absence of a legal framework, as noted by a representative of a ministry: *"We have two different opposing viewpoints regarding internships. We will*

try bringing the different viewpoints, those of the Ministry Education and Science and the Ministry of Economy, closer. We all know that we have to do that, but the question remains which model to choose".

In addition to contractual issues, the discussion revealed a knowledge gap on how to compensate employers providing internships. A respondent from the ministry suggested financial instruments such as grants or specially allocated tax money, or alternatively, no compensation. This discussion concluded in agreement that the government should make commitments to provide national policy guidelines for strengthening internship programmes.

Theme 3 Engagement with business through sector councils and university or regional advisory boards

The discussion regarding the university and business interface revealed three dimensions: creation and engagement of sector councils, involvement of representatives from employers in university advisory boards, and university representatives participating in local/regional business councils. Representatives from sectoral councils described their positive experience in cooperation with vocational schools and colleges, contributing to aligning study programmes with the needs of the labour market. Participants were certain that universities also should become involved with sectoral councils. A representative from a ministry noted: *"We are currently working on a new system, and engagement of sectoral councils in higher education is next on our agenda. I am just concerned whether higher educational institutions will accept that".*

Engaging business representatives in university advisory boards (conventions) was mentioned as another pathway of involving external stakeholders in university strategic planning and providing better understanding of the labour market Concerns were expressed regarding the efficiency of these boards because of the long list of board members and unclear expectations, responsibilities and tasks assigned. A participant from a regional university college mentioned positive outcomes of cooperation with the local business council. Finally, a representative from a ministry mentioned intentions to create study field councils, for example in engineering, natural sciences, information technologies and similar.

Theme 4 Linking up schools and universities for better entrepreneurship education outcomes

Respondents from a ministry, governmental agencies and NGOs highlighted the significance of continuity in entrepreneurship education, starting from school and leading all the way to the university. While a participant from a ministry noted that entrepreneurial skills were included in schooling from elementary to secondary grades, a representative from Junior Achievement Latvia stated that general guidelines for schools were adopted, however, *"The government should clearly describe the learning outcomes of*

entrepreneurship education for each stage of schooling, for example what pupils should know and be able to do at the elementary and secondary stage, and similarly students in higher education. The government should take action and develop policy guidelines, so that it is clear for everybody".

Representatives from sectoral councils agreed that secondary students well-equipped with entrepreneurial skills would develop into entrepreneurial students who would be able to start their entrepreneurship programmes at a higher level. Several respondents referred to the experience of *Junior Achievement Latvia*, stating that Junior Achievement programmes should be introduced in all schools because of internationally recognized and well-structured content and approach.

Theme 5 Impact of financial constraints in the current and future development of entrepreneurship education

Participants mentioned funding as an essential instrument for sustaining sector councils, establishing study field councils, providing internship programmes, developing entrepreneurship programmes and business incubators, and organizing entrepreneurial activities. Responses from representatives from governmental institutions differed from responses from representatives from universities, business and NGOs. Representatives from governmental institutions referred to the state budget constraints, stating that as entrepreneurship is part of social sciences and as funding is being decreased in social sciences in favour of science, engineering and technology, funding for entrepreneurship education would not be available. A representative from the ministry noted: *"To address this issue we are currently in a process looking for solutions. It cannot be done, however, as a revolutionary change over a year, because it is a process of gradual change. We should look at entrepreneurship programmes as integrated in engineering and natural sciences programmes".*

Proportions and configuration of state budget funding were suggested as solutions to provide continuity for successful projects such as sectoral councils and to introduce changes as needed. With funding being linked to regulations and policy guidelines, respondents noted the importance of specific guidelines for entrepreneurship education, including entrepreneurship programmes and internships. Small grants for student entrepreneurial projects and events, for example, business idea competitions were recommended by representatives from business and NGOs.

Theme 6 Lack of coordination among the engaged stakeholders

Representatives from ministries outlined the responsibilities shared between ministries in entrepreneurship education. Even though a representative from a ministry mentioned substantial improvements in coordination between the ministries over the last five years, he could not provide any examples of present projects, mentioning that there were a few task force groups working

together, yet the details were vague. A few representatives from governmental institutions stated that there was no need to launch a new institution or special interface to coordinate entrepreneurship education.

Representatives from business and NGOs mentioned that universities should also be more active in connecting with industries instead of "waiting until the company goes to the university". Regarding entrepreneurship programmes and the entrepreneurship faculty, respondents could not name any platform or interface for sharing resources and experiences.

Theme 7 Sine qua non for standardization of coherent entrepreneurship education nationwide

During the discussion, a majority of respondents referred to standards either established or to be established in entrepreneurship education by the government. In relation to the present higher education context, certain standards were referred to as barriers, for example restrictions on awarding credit points for student entrepreneurial learning in projects linked with business incubators or similar projects. Speaking about changes and innovations in study programmes and curricula, representatives from universities, referred to standards provided by governmental institutions as constraints, indicating to the needs of developing specific standards for entrepreneurship education. Representatives from governmental institutions referred to systemic changes to "remove entrepreneurship from social sciences" and integrate it as an entrepreneurial competence embedded across higher education. A respondent from a ministry noted: *"First, entrepreneurship should be linked to the academic discipline students are studying, and then study programmes should be designed integrating entrepreneurial competence as one of the basic components. Second, studies in academic disciplines should be linked to internships within a standardized framework for cooperation. These are the tools that should be used in developing standards and building study programmes".*

A respondent suggested that the government should develop specific policy guidelines on entrepreneurship education covering all age groups from kindergarten and school to higher education and lifelong learning. However, a few representatives from sectoral councils referred to a number of policy documents that concluded there was no need to create a new policy; the most important issue was implementing the present guidelines more efficiently.

Findings

The analysis of secondary sources indicates the features of the top-down approach currently prevailing in the EU, with the policy designers being the central actors. With entrepreneurship education being a fairly new concept in the EU member states, indeed, implementing a policy change in the national environment calls for a top-down approach (Graham, 2014; Hoppe,

2016) that helps to increase the overall understanding in all social layers over time and underpin the importance of the economic, political and social contexts. The determinants of the top-down approach such as prescriptive policy documents and a clear and consistent message vary across the EU member states. First, the experience in Nordic countries, notably in Norway demonstrates a low level of political conflict and low ambiguity through applying a specific national strategy on entrepreneurship education that also signals the importance of entrepreneurship UNCTAD (2010). The national strategy serves as a framework for setting standards and objectives, allocate policy resources, establish implementing agencies and inter-organisational communication, and this framework has been developed over twelve years. Second, by having entrepreneurship education embedded in different national strategies, the governments of new EU member states including Latvia do not send a clear message about the significance of entrepreneurship education that is recognized by UNCTAD (2010) as characteristic of developing countries. Following this, the pattern is characterized by a combined approach applying the top-down level at an early stage with the potential to gradually transfer to a bottom-up model in which higher education institutions play a central role. Third, regional initiatives as a typical bottom-up approach in extending entrepreneurial culture may result in a "cumulative change" (Rinne & Koivula, 2005) by readdressing entrepreneurship at a national level (Anderson *et al.*, 2014) over time. The overview of policy approaches in the EU member states indicate the importance of interaction between the policy designers at the macro-level and the local community and higher education institutions at the micro-level.

In Latvia the top-down approach is implemented by embedding entrepreneurship education in four different national strategies that might be perceived as embracing larger groups of population UNCTAD (2010). However, without a strong and clear message about the importance of entrepreneurship education in Latvia, the engaged stakeholders experience ambiguity due to each of the national strategies having their specific policy objectives, with entrepreneurship failing to be an obvious policy objective Matland (1995). The data analysis of focus group discussions confirms a lack of coordination and communication between governmental institutions notwithstanding formal task force groups set up for the task. The data resourced from focus group discussions present entrepreneurship education as 'floating' in between institutions while higher education institutions try to 'grab' all resources available. In this vein, the secondary research highlights the top-down approach to implementing entrepreneurship education in Latvia while the data analysis shows ambiguity and descriptive policy documents that are signs of a bottom-up approach.

The findings confirm that a successfully implemented top-down approach at the macro-level establishes foundations for a transition to a

bottom-up approach at the micro-level with the local target community fully engaged. The case of Latvia suggests that a bottom-up approach with different stakeholders involved and pressure from universities, may result in a top-down approach at the micro-level and active local target community at the micro-level. The actions taken to achieve the policy objectives are represented in creating sectoral councils, engaging external stakeholders in university advisory boards, and establishing business incubators, however, the majority of plans are not yet in action but planned for implementation in the near future.

Concluding Remarks

In this study we made an attempt to explore the landscape of entrepreneurship education in general in the EU and Latvia, with respect to higher education in particular. We explored the policy approaches applied to developing entrepreneurship education at higher education institutions and identified the actions taken. The findings show that there is still ambiguity regarding entrepreneurship education, and it can be addressed by 1) policy implementation using a top-down approach that is perceived as sending a clear message to wider society, and it is more efficient and easier to monitor; 2) communication and coordination are essential in the policy implementation process both in top-down and bottom-up approaches; 3) there is evidence that bottom-up and top-down approaches overlap and support each other. We hope this study contributes to building case studies on entrepreneurship education policy context in the EU member states. We also have made an attempt to provide the context for other authors of this anthology to share their research on teaching and learning entrepreneurship in higher education.

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