IS SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP A LEARNING
COMPETENCE?: VISION FROM HIGH EDUCATION ORGANIZATION

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Abstract

The Europe 2020 Strategy is the EU's growth and employment agenda in this decade. It points to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth as a way to overcome the structural deficiencies of the European economy, improve its competitiveness and productivity and sustain a sustainable social market economy. The strategy, as it set, includes seven "flagship initiatives" that provide a framework in which the EU and national administrations can join forces and reinforce each other in areas related to Europe 2020 priorities, such as innovation, the digital economy, employment, youth, industrial policy, poverty and the efficient use of resources.

It’s needed an appropriate regulatory environment and public goods that support economic activity. This may enable businesses to play their role in creating jobs and well-being. Then, thematic factsheets provide cross-country information on economic or social challenges, useful policies to address them, and examples of best practices, for instance, business environment, financial stability, Green economy, public administration, Labour markets and skill, Social protection and cohesion, fiscal stability.

Within this framework high education organizations (HEOs) afford new challenges. This is caused by the need of both transferring knowledge to the society through new business models, startups, patents and other ways of open innovation, and preparing the students to the requirement of society, which is much more aware of the labour market and the employment trends.

Since the last years Spanish universities have created programs to facilitate the development of business plans, start-ups, and the acceleration of existing enterprises, this knowledge hasn’t been introduced to syllabus at Master or Bachelor degrees.

When the focus is on sustainable entrepreneurship, less has been done. There is no culture on entrepreneurship or even a deep training on business management in this kind of studies, due to the fact these one are mainly focused on nature with a main professional career: civil servant in public administration. Thus, the Department of Business Management (UDOE) of the Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingeniería de Montes, Forestal y del Medio Natural (ETSIMFMN) (Forestry Engineering School) of the Universidad Politécnica of Madrid has launched a procedure to promote sustainable entrepreneurial competences UDOE considers entrepreneurship as a way to increase the value proposal of nature-based business in order to promote the role nature is playing in a new social and economic scenario where bioeconomy, circular economy, green jobs, social responsibility and Sustainable Development Goals are drivers for current and future success to fix population in rural areas.

In this paper, sustainable entrepreneurship is firstly defined in order to set a right framework of innovation to achieve Sustainable Development Goals. Secondly, a program to promote systemic change is described. This is mainly formed by different programs like professional training, LifeLongLearning, or educational programmed granted by the UR funds. Learning techniques, like gamification, experiential learning or challenges are combined to get the most successful results. The main one of them is the fact that a new sustainable entrepreneurship ecosystem is being created focused on nature based solutions with the support of one of the most important universities in Spain.

Keywords: Sustainable entrepreneurship, SDG, HEOs, Horizon 2020, LifeLongLearning, Gamification, Experiential Learning.