



## Best Practices over Europe for Education in Entrepreneurship

SOFT SKILLS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET  
OF VET STUDENTS.

Report summarising the results of field researches  
conducted in Hungary, Italy, Spain, Sweden.

November 2021

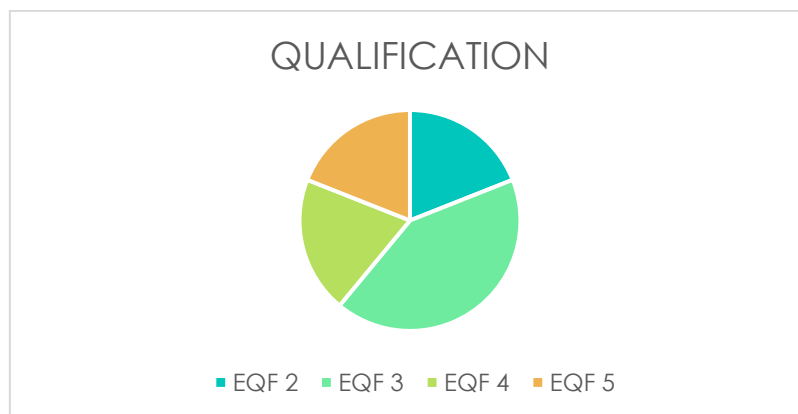
As part of the Erasmus+ project, "BEST4ENT - Best practice over the Europe for Education to Entrepreneurship ("Best4Ent - Best practices in Europe on entrepreneurship education") nr.2020-1-IT01-KA202-008516, the partnership conducted a survey to detect what are the most demanded soft skills on labour market as for a target of young people, namely VET students, in four different countries: Italy, Spain, Sweden and Hungary. The organisations conducting the research:

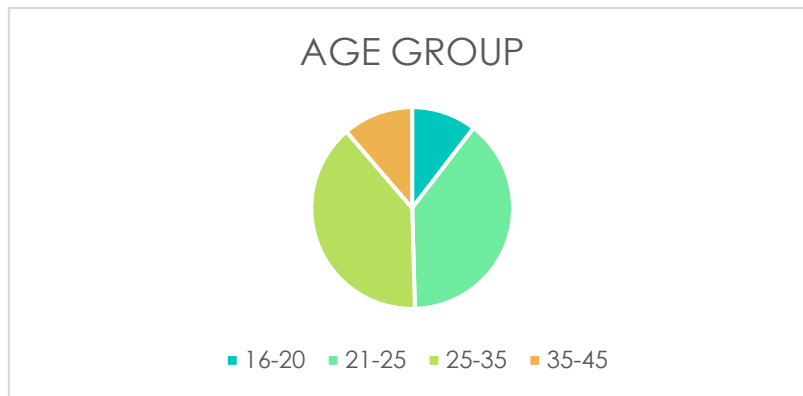
- Polaris Srl, Vasto (Italy)
- Economic and Technological Technical Institute "F. Palizzi", Vasto (Italy)
- Aidejoven, Madrid (Spain)
- Vocational Secondary School "GySzC Kossuth Lajos", Oroshaza (Hungary)
- Mobilizing Expertise, Lund (Sweden)

All of them circulated a questionnaire aimed at local and regional entrepreneurs, HR managers and company managers. There were altogether 26 questions which collected information about the field of operation, employing practices and mostly the required soft skills each employer seeks in the future employee. A total of 240 answers were collected.

The first questions asked about the country of workplace and time spent in HR. According to all responders they either have worked in the field for 5-10 years or over 20 years. These questions also enquired about the sector the business operates in. We found that two main sectors contributed to our work, that are Tourism and Commerce, Industry and Personal Services (social services, educational services, medical-health services, wellness & beauty).

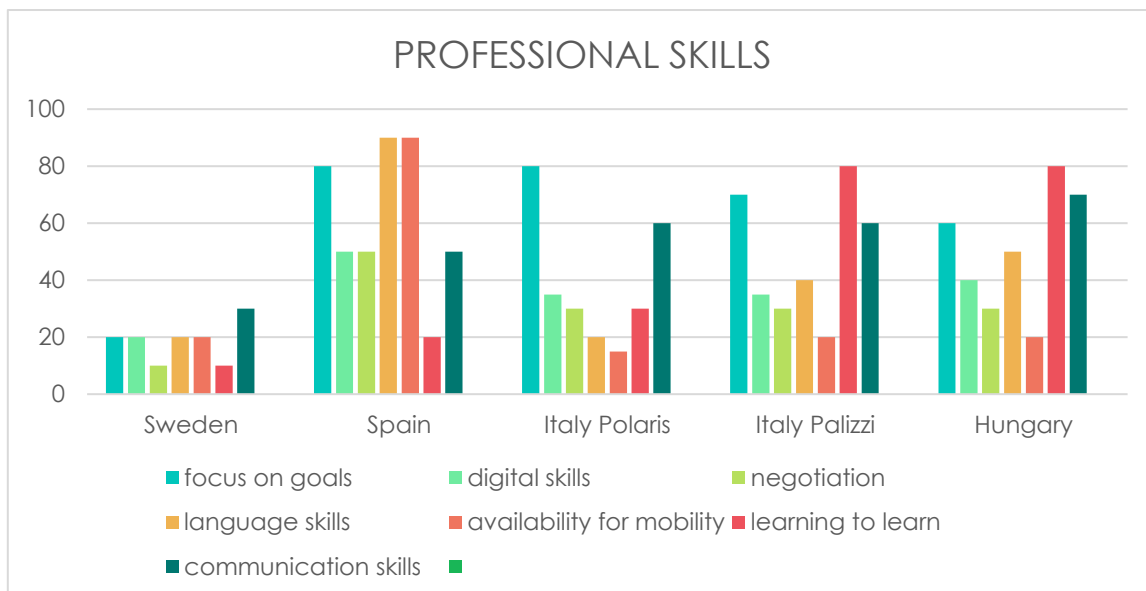
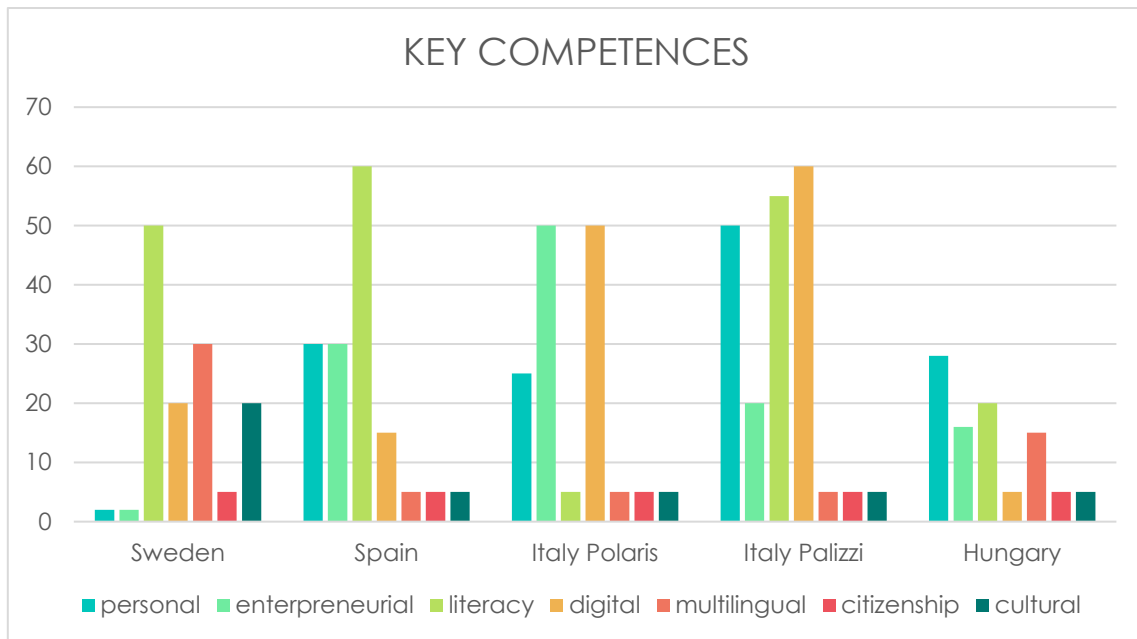
The survey also asked about hiring plans the required qualifications and age group. The results are the following:





The mostly looked after qualifications in each country are professional qualification or vocational and technical school diploma. In Palizzi's research the employers mostly look for EQ6,7 qualifications but also significant the demand for a technical diploma. In Sweden the most demanded qualification is Bachelor degree while in the other three countries lower educational degree is required or looked after. The age group companies, businesses are most likely to with are the same in each country. They prefer employees between the age of 25-35, followed by the age group 21-25. In Sweden 18 % of responders consider hiring people over 45.

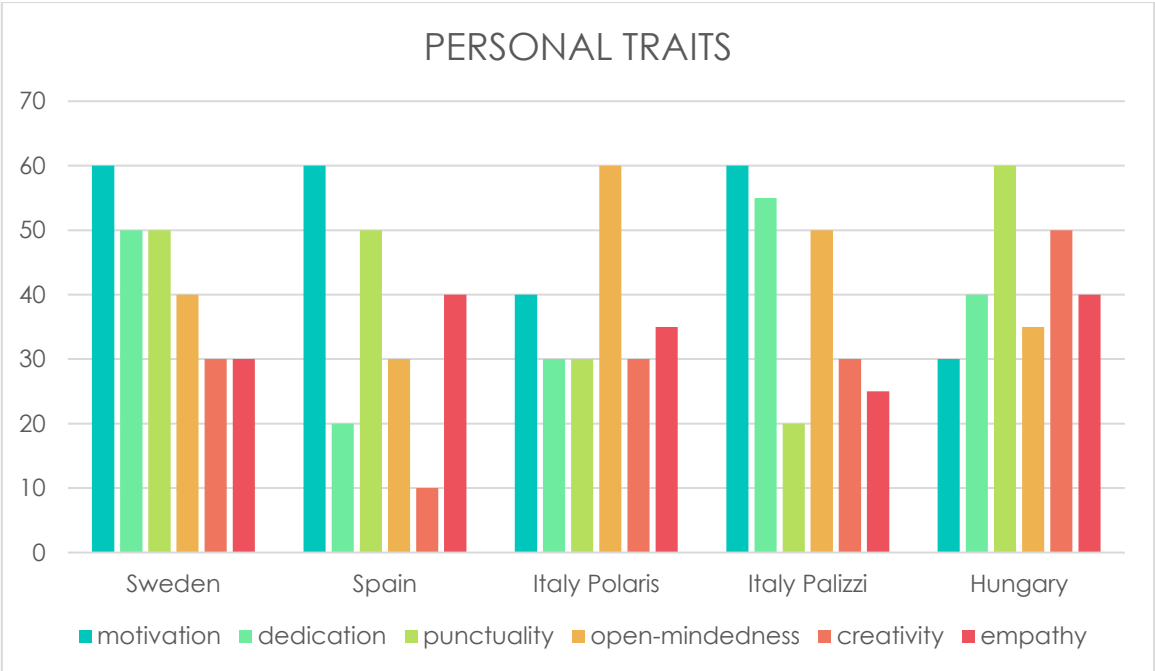
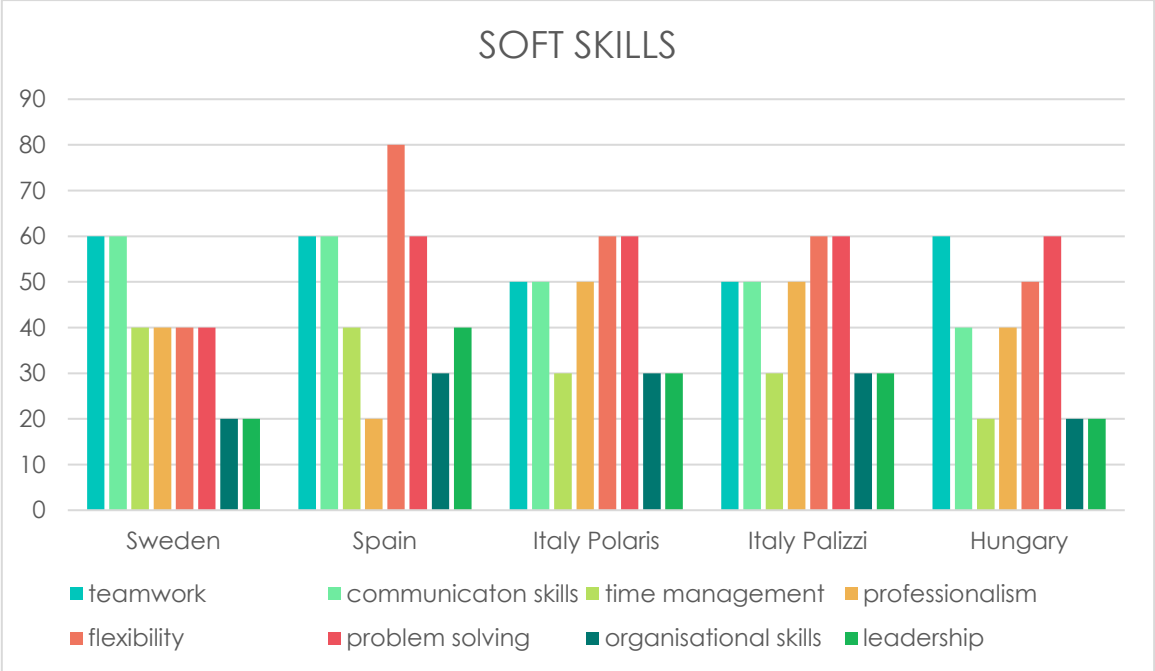
The next questions focused on the key competences and professional skills of applicants that employers find paramount. The questionnaire proposed the following competences and skills. **Functional alphabetic competence**, c.d. literacy (full ability to communicate, both in oral and written form, in one's own language, adapting one's register to contexts and situations), **Multilingual competence** (knowledge of foreign languages lexicon resulting in the ability to communicate both orally and in writing), **Logical-mathematical competence** (ability to solve problems related to everyday life), **Digital competence** (ability to use new technologies with fluency, with the aim of education, training and work), **Personal competence** (ability to organize information and time, to manage one's own training and career path), **Competence in matters of citizenship** (ability to act as a conscious and responsible citizen, fully participating in the social and political life of one's country), **Entrepreneurial competence** (creativity in analyzing reality and finding solutions for complex problems by using imagination, strategic thinking and critical reflection), **Cultural awareness and expression** (knowledge of cultural heritage and ability to connect the individual elements that compose it). Skills: focus on goals, digital skills, negotiation, language skills, availability for mobility, learning to learn, communication skills.



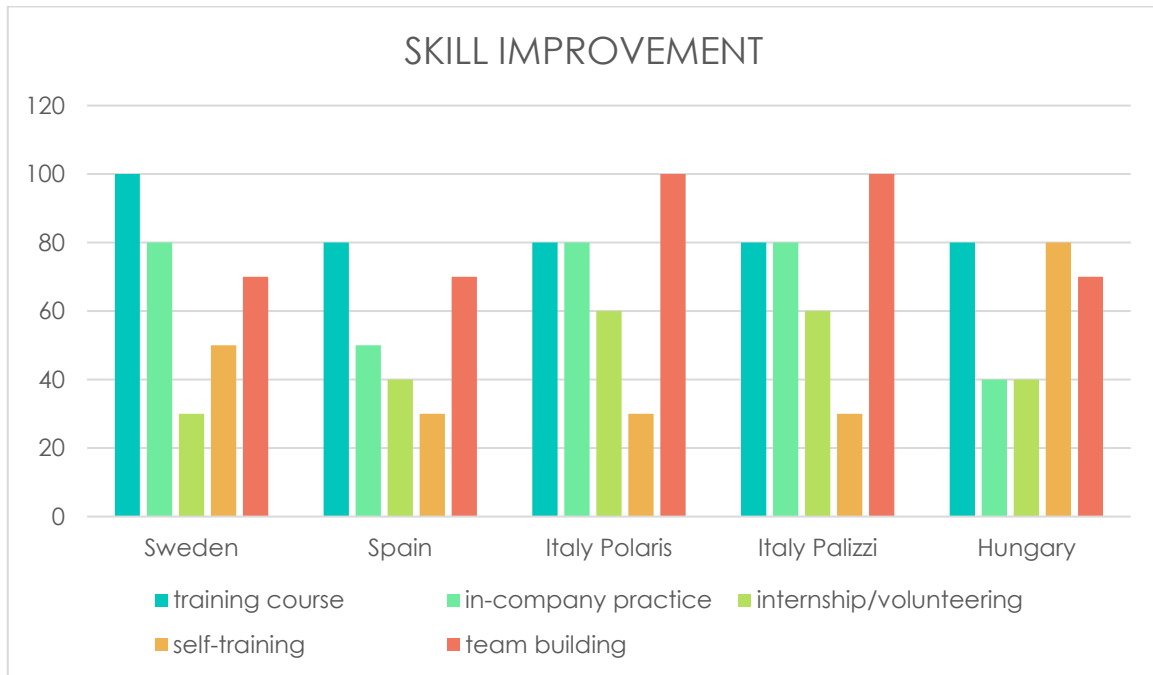
As diagrams show countries have different needs in competences and skills but we can draw a parallel and say that focus on goals, learning to learn and communication skills are essential, digital competences, though are not really needed in each field. While in key competencies almost everyone thinks that the most important is the functional alphabetic competence followed by entrepreneurial and personal competences.

The remaining questions all were about required soft skills and personality traits of employees. Questions also targeted the assessment and improvement methods of these skills. Responders had to decide how important they think these skills are and how essential each is for their own business. Team working (knowing how to work as a team, regardless of the hierarchical position performed), communication skills (ability to effectively transmit information from one person

to another, empathic and involvement skills), time management (knowing how to manage the time available, assigning the right priorities to duties), professionalism (maturity and responsibility in every context and situation), flexibility (ability to adapt to unexpected situations and changes), problem solving (knowing how to find the quickest and most effective solution to solve a problem), organizational skill (ability to identify tasks, resource management and goal orientation), leadership (knowing how to lead a group of people towards the objectives achievement). Also, personal traits such as motivation, dedication, punctuality / accuracy, open-mindedness, creativity, empathy.



The results clearly show that the most important factors are team work, communication skills and flexibility, also almost equally important is time management. Regarding personal traits the importance varies in countries. Motivation, dedication and creativity are essential and as the chart shows punctuality is prioritised in Hungary while in Sweden, Spain and Italy motivation is the key trait required.



As for assessing skills and previous experience most responders said they use job interviews and focus groups. There were choices of training course (formal training), in-company practice (informal training), internship / volunteering abroad, self-learning and team building. Responders of each country found training courses the most effective way of improving skills, they considered in-corporate training and team building equally fruitful. In Hungary self-learning is still appraised as powerful.

All in all, we can say that in each country the demands and needs of the labour market are similar in terms of required qualification, professional and soft skills. Our goal is to create a functional and easy-to-use handbook with good practices of improving soft skills helping entrepreneurship education, covering the ensuing fields: cognitive styles within Insight Discovery and the Role Models (self-awareness, business model canvas), multiple forms of communication (elevator pitch, business idea's storytelling), presentation, image and financing of startups (pitch deck for investors, corporate identity), critical self-assessment (identifying challenges and opportunities from recent history), worked-based learning and learning mobility (WBL and learning mobility, competences needed for VET mobilities).