

REPORT ON THE STUDENT COMPANY

Province of Treviso

Introduction

Italian law does not allow establishing Student Companies. The main restriction is the fact that young people under 18 years of age are not allowed to own or be shareholders in companies, without specific authorisation from the Court further to advice from the magistrates.

Selection of school/ teachers trainers

The Province of Treviso decided to test this project in one of its schools: CFP Vocational School, in Lancenigo.

The project was presented during a Teaching Staff Meeting and during the meeting the suggestion was made to “experiment” the project with the third year classes of the school, given the students’ ages and the skills they had acquired.

The teachers involved in the Student Company were selected according to their personal curriculum and availability.

Project activities presentation Sc to the selected school-teachers

During September 2010, at the beginning of the school year, the third year students were invited to a meeting to present the project (after sending written notification to their parents).

The meeting was held in October with the selected teachers and the third year students. The project was explained to them and the students who were interested were asked to think of any innovative business ideas and to present them to their reference teachers.

Design of Innovation camp & Entrepreneurship camp- smes involvement

The Province adopted the Common model of Innovation Camp (C.I.C.) approved during the 3rd meeting in Norway from all Partners.

The model contemplated the involvement of at least two teachers and a duration of at least 8 h. (in 1 day or 2 half days): the province has involved two teachers and has held the Innovation Camp in the afternoon of two days for a total of 8 h.

As provided in C.I.C. the activities carried out were: introduction to the children to business plan tools, entrepreneurial experiences, reading of business challenge (participation of four local businessmen and representatives of social partners), brainstorming activity, idea development and idea competition. As required in C.I.C. we have made available to students a room to work with the equipment and

teaching materials they needed. Since almost all students were under age parental consent was required for achieving the above.

Training of Trainers in order to implement a Student Company

During two afternoons on 28th and 29th June 2010, the teachers from the province and the partner countries attended the lessons held by Anne Karine Sveinall, Director of the Adolf Oien School in Trondheim (NO) - an expert in student companies. Ms Sveinall explained the Norwegian model to the teachers, interacting with them all.

Dissemination of the S.C. project in the local area

On 29th June 2010, at 09:00, a press conference was held in the Auditorium of the Treviso Provincial Council offices with all the project partners, the Councillor for Social, Labour and Professional Training Policies for the Province of Treviso, representatives from the Chambers of Commerce, the Inland Revenue Office and Category Associations present.

Student Company Idea Selection

At the end of October, fifteen students divided in four groups presented their 4 ideas for innovative business.

The ideas were: designing a single plate to hold both the croissant and the coffee cup, a watch with an alarm and GPS in the case of an assault, an automatic sun product dispenser in seaside resorts and an umbrella with a double extension for singles or couples.

To develop the ideas, the students had contacted the various companies in an attempt to understand the feasibility of their ideas for the project.

A market survey was held in the school about the effective usefulness of their ideas, through a questionnaire filled in by people who attended the adult courses.

Innovation & entrepreneurship camp implementation: entrepreneurship case studies Innovation camp report (workshop/case studies)

The Innovation Camp was held over two afternoons in November with fifteen students and a committee of experts from various fields (four entrepreneurs and a social representative).

The students were divided in four groups; they introduced themselves and their ideas to the committee. A debate was then held on the business matters: Business and economic organisation, motivation, how to start a new business, etc.

On 23rd December 2010 a mixed committee chose the best idea based on the following criteria:

The level of innovation, its economic and financial feasibility, the quality of the business plan, the availability for spending in the area.

The selected idea was for the production of a croissant and coffee cup plate.

Student company description: business plan, setting up Student Company, operation and management, closing of company.

The Student Company was denominated "IntelligentDish GDG". It was formed as a cultural no-profit association. The legal standing was that of a registered association that is not recognised but is a legal body, with autonomy with respect to the single partners (the CFP director, who is the legal representative, and eight students), it would have its own equity (eventually) which would be in the form of a cash pool.

GDG was established on the basis of a private deed not subject to stamp duty, in two copies which were signed and dated by all the founding partners, and it comprised:

- A deed of partnership (of the company) expressing the wish of the partners to establish an association.
- Bylaws with the rules for its management and organisation.

After the private deed had been drawn up, it was presented to the local Inland Revenue office for a tax code to be assigned, after which the Deed of Partnership was registered with the Inland Revenue.

For registration, the following were presented:

- The deed of partnership in two original copies, subject to affixing 6 duty stamps.
- Two copies of Form 69 and a copy of the payment receipt for the registration which was made using form F23.

Once GDG had been registered with the Inland Revenue, it was registered with the Chamber of Commerce, and with the Economic Administrative Register which is purely for statistics purposes. This registration was done online (Form R).

To be able to conduct its business, the association had to obtain a VAT number. The request was sent to the Inland Revenue on Form AA7/10, which was filled in and signed by the legal representative. Within 90 days from registration, the association's data were transmitted to the tax office on the EAS Form.

The administrative costs for opening the Student Company were approx. 500 Euros.

The managerial structure of GDG "Intelligent Plate" was:

Chairman (Director of CFP), General Manager (Student partner), Administration Office (three student partners, one office manager),

Marketing Management (one student partner and three student partners without work).

There was also an executive committee formed of a Chairman and five student partners.

To draw up the Business Plan the students used a basic model provided by the Chamber of Commerce, which was adapted to their business.

Closing of company:

The Student Company was closed on 27th July 2011. The students notified the Inland Revenue of the termination of the tax code and vat code on 28th July.

The 500 plates were produced with the support of Tognana SpA, and were given to the CFP School in Lancenigo to test them on the market.

Conclusions.

POSITIVE ELEMENTS

The positive elements from the experience are:

- The curiosity, motivation and dedication of the students involved. During the period the Student Company was operative, they were very committed to achieving the company targets, working very hard outside school hours as well.
- The students demonstrated very strong orientation towards the results and a very keen ability in establishing profitable relationships with both customers and suppliers.
- Improved school results by the students in the various skills they put into play in managing the company, especially in terms of communications and English language.
- Increased awareness of the role of an entrepreneur, to the extent that the students seriously consider the possibility of a future where they will have their own business.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

The critical elements are:

- Legislation and lack of specific channels for developing businesses within the school system.
- The amount of time spent in researching the possibility of opening a student company which, in our system, is not foreseen and, therefore, if no basic alterations are made within the various boards involved, it will be very difficult to implement.

- For the experiment given in the project, an association was established in February 2011 and was then closed in July 2011: far too short a time to be able to cover all the aspects involved with company management, especially if we consider that a good three months were needed just to prepare everything that was needed to open the association.