

EUROPE [4] - 2013

JA-YE'S COMPANY PROGRAMME SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

A. BASIC INFORMATION

Country:	France, with Estonia, Finland, Romania, Slovakia and the UK in a consulting capacity
Title of initiative:	Company Programme Self-Assessment Tool
Coordinator/ Organization:	Learning Community SRL – a private institute for educational research and experimentation
Key competences addressed:	<p>Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship. In particular, the assessment tool focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Creativity · Self-confidence · Taking initiative · Teamwork · Resourcefulness · Perseverance · Taking responsibility
Type of initiative and channels used for implementation (e.g. curriculum reform introduced through legislation etc.)	Self-assessment tool for students involved in the Company Programme (Mini-Companies)
Partners:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · JA-YE Europe · JA Estonia · JA-YE Finland · JA Romania · JA Slovakia · EPA France · YE UK · Citibank

Scope: (student/teacher/school level; local/regional/national)	Secondary school students
Learning context: (formal or non-formal)	Formal and non-formal (depending on the country)
School education level/s: (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary)	Upper secondary
Target groups:	Students
Time frame: (start and end date)	January 2013 – June 2014 (pilot phase)
Relevant links:	http://ja-yecoreprogrammes.org/company_programme/

B. SUMMARY

The main aim of the project is to create an impact self-assessment tool to enable the JA-YE Europe **Company Programme** to show evidence of its results through self-assessment

The self-assessment tool has 3 phases of assessment throughout the programme implementation: at the beginning (stage zero), at the initialisation stage (stage one) and at the completion phase (stage two).

This assessment method allows students to monitor their progress in achieving certain competences throughout their Company Programme school year.

The tool was developed by EPA (*Entreprendre Pour Apprendre*) France, the French organisation of the JA-YE Europe network, and will be now translated into other languages and adapted to all European organisations implementing the Company Programme.

An online platform will be set up by JA-YE Europe in order to gather all results. The platform will allow JA-YE Europe to have comparable European data on the impact of a programme that enrolls 230,000 students throughout Europe every year.

C. IN DEPTH INFORMATION

Rationale/contextual background/motivation for introducing the initiative/reform:

Assessment for learning focuses on the opportunities to develop students' ability to evaluate themselves and to make judgements about their own performance and improve upon it. It makes use of authentic assessment methods and offers many opportunities for students to develop their skills through formative assessment and using summative assessment sparingly. The assessment also helps teachers to understand the areas which can be improved in the teaching process and allows for a more individual approach to teaching.

Well-designed assessment can encourage active learning, especially when the assessment delivery is innovative and engaging. Peer and self-assessment, for instance, can foster a number of skills – such as reflection, critical thinking and self-awareness – as well as giving students an insight into the assessment process.

There is little consistent data available to compile a European evaluation that would prove the effectiveness of the *JA-YE Europe Company Programme* and that would demonstrate that the collaboration in the JA-YE Europe network has a positive impact on the programme. The effectiveness of the JA-YE Company Programme is measured in many different ways across Europe and the results of different evaluations are not compatible across borders. A number of members of JA-YE lack a quality tool for measuring the effectiveness of the Company Programme.

There is therefore a need to have common assessment tools for the 230,000 students that are involved in the Company Programme in Europe every year.

Objectives:

- Create an assessment tool for the Company Programme to show evidence of its results through self-assessment;
- Create stronger partnership with the education administration by being able to operate a European system for assessing the competences acquired in the Company Programme and by providing feedback to students and teachers on their progress. This feedback will be broad in scope, covering informal levels through to formal/certification levels;
- Attract more/new educational institutions to introduce the Company Programme and reach more students.

Dimensions targeted by the initiative/reform (e.g. student curriculum, assessment, initial/in-service teacher education, school autonomy etc.):

Self-assessment tool (series of online questionnaires where students reflect on their entrepreneurial competences as they progress through the year).

Overall approach (e.g. holistic – existence of an overarching strategy, or targeted approach focusing on a specific dimension etc.):

The Company Programme is an activity based on learning-by-doing in a school business, with practical hands-on activities led by a voluntary business consultant for secondary school students (16-19 years old).

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Detailed explanation of the key competence/s concerned:

The skills and competences gained through the Company Programme are normally grouped into two distinct but interconnected categories, encompassing **transversal competences** and **business (entrepreneurial) skills**. In addition to the impact on transversal, personal and business competences, mini-companies allow students to begin to think actively about, and decide on, their future education or employment pathway.

The self-assessment tool focuses on the seven main transversal competences that students gain during their Company Programme experience, as identified by EPA France and JA-YE Europe:

- **Creativity:** I have ideas and I am creative
- **Self-confidence:** I feel confident about myself
- **Taking initiative:** I am able to take initiative
- **Teamwork:** I can work in a team
- **Resourcefulness:** I have the resources to deal with the influence of external factors and I can take an action accordingly
- **Perseverance:** Despite difficulties, I am able to persevere towards the achievement of my goals
- **Taking responsibility:** I am conscious of my actions and take responsibility for them

The main business (entrepreneurial) skills that students gain in the company programme are:

- **Marketing Strategies:** *I know how to turn an idea into a market opportunity*
- **Company Structures and Roles:** *I know how companies are structured*
- **HR and Organisation:** *I know why the division of labour is important for an enterprise*
- **Design and Production:** *I am able to coordinate the production of a product*
- **Business Plan:** *I am able to create a business plan*
- **Customer Care:** *I understand why customer focus is so important for an entrepreneur*
- **Financial literacy:** *I understand the financial aspects of entrepreneurship and how a business generates profit*
- **International Trade:** *I am familiar with international trade procedures*
- **Investment pitching:** *I can pitch my idea to possible investors*

The self-assessment tool does not cover the business skills section, but JA-YE Europe is developing other assessment tools to assess skills and knowledge and to measure the results of the Company Programme in all its aspects.

Specific subjects concerned or cross-curricular approach:

The Company Programme has obvious links with curriculum areas such as business studies and economics, but due to the diversity of functions performed in running a mini-company and the range of products and services that students can choose, there are links with many other areas of the curriculum, including:

- Work-Related Learning; Enterprise; PSHE; Financial Capability; Careers Education; Functional Skills; Personal Learning and Thinking Skills; Foreign Languages; Mathematics; ICT; Citizenship; Geography; Communication; Drama; Art and Design; Design and Technology.

How the initiative/reform is being implemented (e.g. process followed, political commitment, consultation with stakeholders and their respective roles, incentives for stakeholders, dedicated funding, teaching material, definition of goals and standards, assessment and evaluation mechanisms, impact on teacher training/professional development and school practices/leadership, scaling-up approach, based on research/evidence? etc.):

Students assess themselves before they begin (stage zero), at the initialisation phase (stage one) and at the completion phase (stage two), through questionnaires in which they a) reflect on the difficulty of a particular task, and b) define what that competence means. Results show students' understanding and mastery of these competences.

The assessment process follows this scheme:

SELF-EVALUATION



What I have drawn from this exercise "FROM ACTIONS TO COMPETENCES"

The 'Status Artis' analysis, which reports on existing European standards, practices, tools and technological devices for the assessment and recording of KC in adult education at a European level has been completed.

Present stage/phase of implementation:

At this stage of the initiative the JA-YE member organisations are adapting (translating) the tool, which will be then be placed on an online assessment platform and piloted in five countries in 2013. The tool will then be made available for all 36 European Countries that implement the Company Programme (2014/2015).

Pedagogical issues (issues related to how key competences are being taught to students and how are teachers being prepared to teach them):

Student and teacher guides will be developed and teachers will also receive training on the process.

What works well (to identify enablers):

This is a very powerful tool both in terms of assessment and also in making students aware of the process in which they are involved with the Company Programme.

Self-assessment can:

- **Assess understanding as well as knowledge:** this tool can provide an insight into students' true comprehension and can help to identify gaps in their knowledge.
- **Promote student-centred learning:** Encouraging students to examine their own learning and levels of understanding is an important 'wake-up call' that identifies areas that require improvement. This approach promotes a shift towards student-centred learning, in which students define their own goals and the steps required to meet them.
- **Consolidate and promote deeper learning:** Reflecting on the things that they have learned requires students to consider new knowledge in the light of their previous experiences. This can open up new levels of understanding, as well as dispel any former misconceptions they may have had.
- **Improve student engagement:** The transfer of ownership that takes place through discussions of assessment criteria can lead to a greater degree of student engagement and can encourage them to apply these criteria objectively and consistently.
- **Promote the development of judgment skills:** In order to assess their own work, students must develop their judgment skills so that they can define what is 'good' or what is 'bad' about a piece of work. This ability to judge the quality of a piece of work can then be more widely applied to the work of others, something that is crucial in a programme such as the Company Programme, where students work in teams.

Challenges and how these are being addressed (to identify obstacles and solutions):

Assessment requires comparison between the current state and the desired state of understanding. However, in order to self-assess, students must be able to identify their own current state as well as their desired state; this is complex thinking. Students must have some understanding of a subject in order to be able to tackle the challenge of self-assessment, and this is something that does not always happen.

It is therefore crucial to train teachers to guide students in their self-assessment process and then to combine the self-assessment with other, more 'traditional', assessment tools

Implementation in different national contexts will require thorough testing and adjustment of the tool in order to match the multi-national character of the JA-YE Europe network.

Monitoring & evaluation so far/planned, and which methods are being used (e.g. internal/external quality assurance, inspection, national assessments, international tests, self-evaluation, formative or summative evaluations):

The project is still in its pilot phase, therefore no evaluation is foreseen at this stage.

To ensure quality, JA-YE Europe has hired external consultants to assess the work of its member organisations on the adaptation of the test and to prepare a common framework.

Regular meetings and exchange webinars with the CEOs of all JA-YE Europe member organisations are held throughout the various phases of the project's implementation.

Impact (e.g. any planned impact assessment?):

In the pilot phase the tool will be tested in five countries, with two schools in each country.

Once the final version of the tool is approved and the online platform (+ database) is finalised, the tool will be made available for all 34 countries implementing the Company Programme.

All 230,000 students involved in the programme each year will be able to use the tool.

Analysis of results and cross-country comparisons will be monitored and regularly evaluated.

Communication of the initiative/dissemination of outputs and activities:

This tool will be also the basis for a **clear and consistent impact-driven measurement framework** that could be applicable to all regions and all member organisations.

Once the assessment tool is ready, JA-YE Europe and its member organisations will therefore develop a common language **as a prerequisite to a European reporting tool**. This does not only mean sharing the same view on JA's strategy on reporting, but also having common definitions of reporting variables with no room for divergent interpretations. Indeed, the value of a common reporting tool lies in its ability to be simple, standardised and globally meaningful.

Having a common tool for assessing the main competences and reporting on the impact of the project at European level would give the opportunity to JA-YE Europe and its member organisations to present the assessment results at European events focusing on entrepreneurship education, stakeholder dialogues, JA-YE events and to all JA-YE donors (private and public).

Next steps/follow-up:

The assessment tool will be available by 2014.