

Comparative study of students' willingness and readiness to become entrepreneurs

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Comparative study of students' willingness and readiness to become entrepreneurs: The present paper includes an analysis and comparison of the willingness and readiness of students of Ruse University "Angel Kanchev", Bulgaria and "Politehnica" University of Timisoara, Romania to start an own business after graduation. The reason for this type of investigation is a bilateral cooperation on a project between these two universities.

Key words: students, willingness and readiness, entrepreneurship, comparative analysis

INTRODUCTION

„Entrepreneurship is a manifestation of the ability and willingness of individuals, by themselves or in a group, inside or outside the confines of a certain organization, to catch and use existing and create new economic possibilities, to introduce their ideas and bring them to the market, overcoming uncertainty and other obstacles, taking decisions about place and way of resources allocation and usage of institutions.” [1] This definition of entrepreneurship shows the basic role of the willingness of people and their readiness to overcome certain obstacles in their lives as entrepreneurs. That is also in the focus of the first groups of questions of the enquiry on the project which topic is „Comparative study regarding the training needs for the development of entrepreneurial competences in the context of E.U. post-integration period”. At the Romanian side the project has been signed between the National Romanian Science Fund and University “Politehnica” Timisoara [3]. From Bulgarian side it has been signed between National Science Fund of Bulgaria and Ruse University “Angel Kanchev”. [4]

The purpose of the present report is to identify and compare the level of students' willingness and readiness to start an own business after their graduation.

This report is expected to have a contribution to the efforts of the both universities to have a better preparation of their students as entrepreneurs and to improve the activities at both universities, related to entrepreneurship support. For the Ruse University the here presented analyses will have a direct effect on the activities, organized by the Entrepreneurship Center and Department of Management and Business Development [5].

2. BASIC RESULTS AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSES

The methodology of this study has been developed in close collaboration among the two teams [2; 6]. The number of interviewed students is 214 from Ruse University and 235 from Timisoara University, which fits the limits of the sample size.

Analysis of the results of the questionnaire, concerning the willingness and readiness of students from the two universities to become entrepreneurs

The prevailing part of the answers given by the Romanian (48.6%) and Bulgarian (43.4%) students to the question how determined they feel to become entrepreneurs is “Medium determined”. The second position is for the answers “Determined” as here the percentage of the Romanian students is a little bigger – 30.6% compared to 28,9% of the Bulgarian students who have chosen this option for themselves. The difference between the results for the Bulgarian and Romanian students who define themselves as “Very determined” to start an own business is insignificant – only 0.5%. 15,3% of the Bulgarian students have described themselves as little or not determined at all to become entrepreneurs which is with 5.5% more that the Romanian students who have chosen these answers. It can be concluded that the Bulgarian students are less determined and feel more uncertain in this field of self- realization.

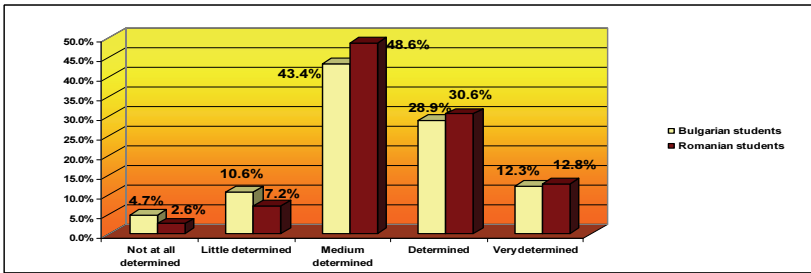


Fig. 1 How determined are you to become an entrepreneur?

To the question about the motivation to become an entrepreneur most of the students have pointed more than one reply, which is the reason to have a total percentage more than 100%. This is valid also for the results shown on figures 6 and 7. According to fig. 3 the Bulgarian students are motivated to become entrepreneurs mostly by material wealth and the desire to do something interesting, followed by new field of professional development as a motivation factor.

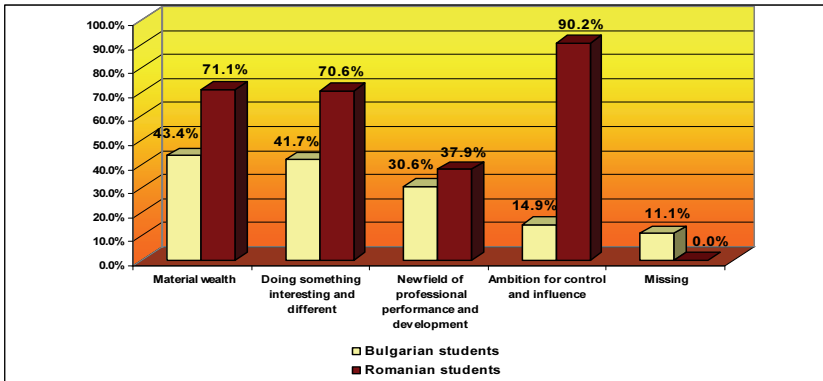


Fig. 2 What is your motivation to go into business by yourself?

The ambition for control and influence has less importance for the Bulgarian students as a reason to start an own business. In the same this is the most attractive thing in being an entrepreneur for the Romanian students – 90.2% of them have chosen this answer as a motivating factor. At second position the Romanian students have replied that material wealth and doing something interesting can motivate them to become entrepreneurs.

The entrepreneurs' life is associated with taking risks every day. That is why the readiness of the students to become entrepreneurs depends on their willingness to take risks. In this regard Fig. 4 shows that the predominant part of the Bulgarian (55.3%) and Romanian (59.6%) students have selected the medium level of the scale which says that they risk "from time to time". This answer reveals that more than half of the inquired students are not willing to take risk to extend necessary for being an entrepreneur. Very small part of the respondents have answered that they take risk very often, which is a significant feature of the entrepreneur in principle.

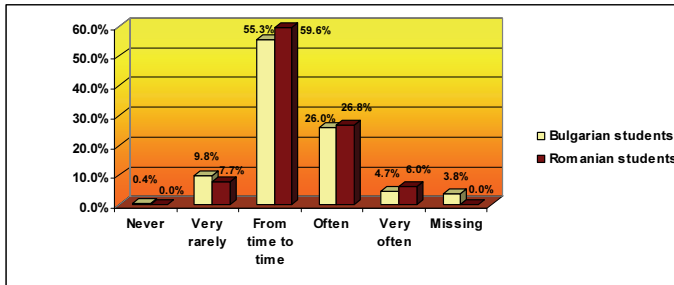


Fig.3 How often does it happen to you to take the risk in your everyday life?

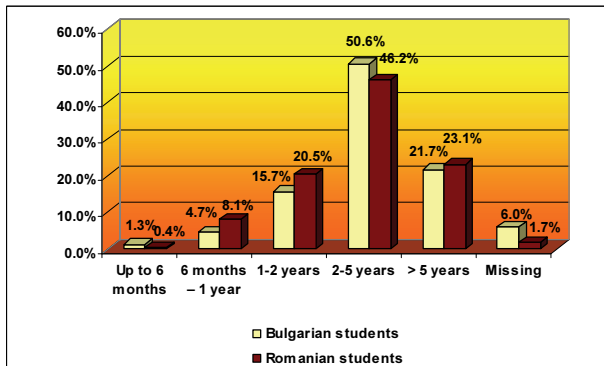


Fig. 4 Estimate the time horizon until do you think that you will be capable to become entrepreneur?

The time period in which the students are ready to start a business also shows the readiness to become entrepreneurs. 1.3 % of the Bulgarian students have pointed that can start a business up to six months as this percentage is only 0.4% for the Romanian respondents. However, 8.1% of the Romanian students feel ready to establish their own business in a period from 6 months to 1 year compared to 4.7% of the Bulgarian students. About 70% of the Bulgarian and the Romanian respondents have chosen the period from 2 to 5 or more than 5 years in which they could start a business. These results show that the students in the both countries feel uncertain and not ready to become entrepreneurs soon and they need additional knowledge and skills.

Other specifics of the entrepreneur's life can also be attractive and can be described as advantages of this type of future realization of the students. The students had to grade them by a scale from one to five but many of them have chosen more than one advantage for the first or second position and that is why the sum of the percentages is not equal to 100%. Nevertheless the results show that the most important advantage of being an entrepreneur for both Bulgarian and Romanian students is the possibility to find realization of your own ideas. To be more flexible in time, to have a superior income and being boss of oneself have almost the same share of all the answers given from the Bulgarian students.

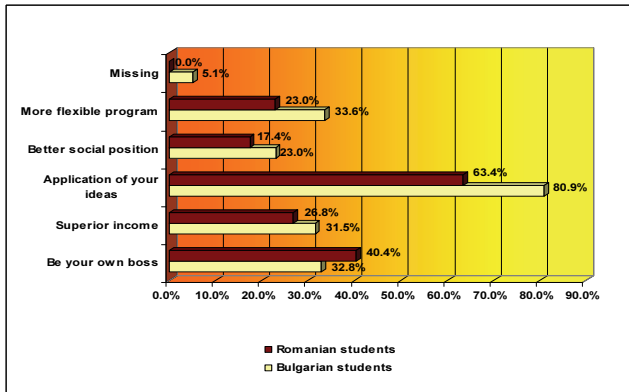


Fig.5 Which are the most important advantages of being an entrepreneur?

Regarding the Romanian students and their replies there is a more well-defined second position of the advantage "Being your own boss." From the suggested alternatives "better social position" is the last that can be motivating for starting an own business by the students in Bulgaria and Romania as it is still a little bit more important for the students in Bulgaria.

On the other hand students had to grade some of the unfavourable sides of being an entrepreneur. The results give information about what can make them wish less the realization in the field of entrepreneurship. It is interesting to note that the too intensive work is considered as a weak point only from 8.9% of the Romanian students compared to 29.4% of the Bulgarian. In the same time 51.5 % from the Bulgarian students find that the greatest disadvantage of the entrepreneur's life is the big responsibility he or she has to take, compared to 71.5% for the Romanian.

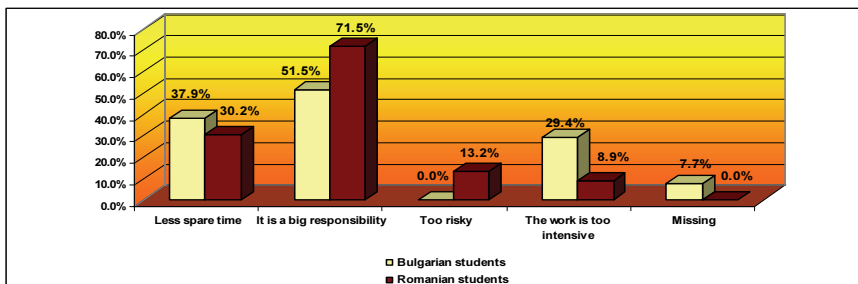


Fig.6 Which are the most important disadvantages of being an entrepreneur?

The answer "too risky" as a disadvantage of the entrepreneur's life has been pointed out by 13.2% of the Romanian respondents, but by no of the Bulgarian. It could be assumed that the reason is the very narrow connection between responsibility and risk. "Less spare time" is positioned in the middle by both the Bulgarian and Romanian students.

CONCLUSION:

Using the results discussed above the following conclusions can be done:

1. The answers of the Bulgarian and Romanian students regarding the questions concerning their determination to start an own business, the time period in which they feel able to do it and the willingness to take risk follow one and the same trend. There are some insignificant differences in the percentage of the answers of the students of the two groups. Both the Bulgarian and Romanian students grade approximately the same way the main advantages of being entrepreneurs as they define as most important the possibility to apply their own ideas and to be independent.

2. The main differences between the Bulgarian and Romanian students in regard with their willingness and readiness to become entrepreneurs concern the following points:

- More Bulgarian students than Romanian are willing to work for themselves and have freedom in their work but in the same time they feel more uncertain in starting an own business that the Romanian students who have this desire.

- Most of the Romanian students identify the desire and possibility to control and to have influence on other people as the main motivating factor to be entrepreneurs, while for the Bulgarian students it is the material wealth, followed by dealing with something interesting and exciting.

- Regarding the most important disadvantages of being an entrepreneur the Romanian students who have chosen "big responsibility" are considerably more than the Bulgarian. On the other hand, the Bulgarian students choose "too intensive work" as a significant weakness.

It can be concluded that in spite of the differences in the answers of Bulgarian and Romanian students on some questions, as a whole they are willing to start an own business but they feel uncertain and still are not ready to do it. The reasons for the insufficient degree of readiness of students to become entrepreneurs and the possible actions to increase it by their education and training at the university will be discussed in further scientific elaborations on the project.

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The paper has been reviewed.

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³ **V.Gedinach** has processed the information received from the inquired Bulgarian students about the cited questions from the questionnaire.

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