

Implementation of Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning 2010-2014 - a research conducted in Croatian primary schools

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Summary

After the National Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning 2010-2014 (2010) has outlined the introduction of learning and training for entrepreneurship in all forms, types and levels of formal and informal education, in the National Curriculum Framework for Preschool Education and the General Compulsory and Secondary Education (2010) among students' basic competence the development of entrepreneurial competences has been included, since entrepreneurship in Croatia has been finally recognized as a means and prerequisite condition for the economical development and growth.

A very demanding task of adopting the basic entrepreneurial knowledge and the development of entrepreneurial characteristics of students has been provided by the National Curriculum Framework as an interdisciplinary content, i.e. curricular theme covered through different school subjects, whose detailed design and development is left to school professionals and school curricula.

Some Croatian researches on whether and how practical teaching of entrepreneurship is implemented in Croatian primary and secondary schools suggest considerable discrepancy between expectations (needs) and realization (knowledge, skills and attitudes) in practice. Analyses of Croatian educational programs (curricula). indicate such results, as well as the results of the survey tests on students' and teachers' awareness and attitudes.

This paper presents the results of the application of specifically designed questionnaire which we used at the end of 2013/ 2014 school year, since the end of the five-year period is pretty close, to investigate whether and to what extent have certain goals, tasks and activities been achieved, in the opinion of school managements, pursuant to the Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning 2010-2014, i.e. measures, objectives and activities of the corresponding Action Plan for the period from 2010 to 2014, in part which refers to the system of primary education.

We have discovered low to very low levels of realization for a number of elements planned by the Strategy and the Action Plan, as well as the achieved results among students, which in future will require significant changes and larger and more organized efforts in this educational area that is of particular individual, social and economic importance. Apart from scientific purposes, the empirical results of this study can serve as practical guidelines in the field of entrepreneurial learning.

Key words: *Learning for entrepreneurship, curriculum, students' entrepreneurial competences, National Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning 2010-2014*

1. Introduction

As emphasized in the professional community, “there is a need to analyze the situation and ways to implement the standards of the European Reference Framework and one of its eight key competences for lifelong learning: Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship within Croatian education system.” (Elezović et al., 2012, p. 5).

The most important Croatian documents in this area are the National Curriculum Framework for pre-school education and general compulsory and secondary education (Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, 2010 - hereinafter referred to as the National Curriculum Framework) and Strategy Entrepreneurial Learning for 2010-2014 (The Government of the Republic of Croatia, 2010 - hereinafter referred to as the Strategy).

The concept of the eight core competences for lifelong learning is integrated in the National Curriculum Framework, as determined in the European Framework of Reference (European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, 2006). Initiative and entrepreneurship are considered to be one of the key competencies that students need for successful functioning in new and volatile market environments.

The National Curriculum Framework gives educational institutions (kindergartens, primary and secondary schools) the ability and obligation to implement entrepreneurship learning as a cross-curricular theme, which is in accordance with the aforementioned European concept. The starting point is the fact that this is a student competence whose development does not fall within one of the existing school subjects listed in the curricula, but in all educational areas, and all subjects, while the possible reason may also be the proportionate workload of students caused by the number of existing school subjects and schedule. In the description of entrepreneurship as a cross-curricular theme several aims are listed as the main objective of the development of entrepreneurial competencies of students: development of personality traits and knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to an individual in order to function as entrepreneurial person that is successful in both life and business. Apart from the implementation in individual subjects, cross-curricular themes can also be achieved in the form of joint projects or modules. Processing cross-curricular topics, including entrepreneurship, is not presented in detail, except from being prescribed as mandatory in all subjects.

The National Curriculum Framework just announced that the development of that cross-curricular topic will be taken into account during future curricular programming for particular subjects, and in both core and differentiated part of the curriculum. Schools are left with the obligation of developing and devising ways in which to pursue entrepreneurship learning as a cross-curricular theme, and high competence and effectiveness of performance are expected of the teachers.

National Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning 2010-2014 is considered as an indicator of implementation of European policies and a very significant step forward in the entrepreneurial education in the Republic of Croatia (Elezović et al., 2012). The main objectives of the Strategy are: 1. to sensitize the public about entrepreneurship and develop a positive attitude towards lifelong learning for entrepreneurship, and 2. to introduce entrepreneurship learning and training as a key competence in all shapes, types and levels of formal, non-formal and informal education and learning. Nevertheless, it stems from the fact that the systematic development is the most effectively achieved through the formal education system, within the regular school system. For this purpose, accompanying Action Plan for the period from 2010 to 2014 (hereinafter referred to as

the Action Plan) contains a series of measures, targets and concrete activities to be implemented, one part of which refers to a system of elementary education, which is the subject matter of this paper.

Via the Strategy and the Action Plan was, for example, predicted that a web portal on entrepreneurial learning for all types of formal, non-formal and informal education will be created by 2010, as well as the system for teachers' participation in curriculum development. Furthermore, it was planned to complete the curriculum for entrepreneurship in the field of preschool, primary and secondary education by the end of 2012, and its full implementation was announced by 2014. It was announced that each year, from 2011 to 2014, 25% of teachers and professionals will receive an education in the process of training for entrepreneurship and that by 2012 necessary special manuals and textbooks and didactic and methodical materials will be drafted. The Strategy and the Action Plan also stipulated, at the level of schools themselves, that during the period of their validity at least 25% of primary schools will establish a cooperative or a training firm, and all secondary schools will establish a training firm, and that the improvement of cooperation and networking between schools and businesses and scientific-research institutions, as well as the partnership between educational institutions, will enrich and enhance entrepreneurial programs and projects, increase the transfer and exchange of knowledge, and more.

With the majority of measures, targets and actions in the Action Plan relating to formal education, including primary education, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports was proclaimed a holder, in cooperation with other institutions. When it comes to curriculum and training programs development, motivating teachers, education management, teacher training, involvement in curriculum development, development of schools as "entrepreneurial schools," the design and implementation of appropriate curricular and extracurricular activities to foster entrepreneurial competences, production of manuals, textbooks and other didactic-methodical materials, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports and the Education and Teacher Training Agency were proclaimed holders.

In the time before the adoption of the Strategy and the National Curriculum Framework, in a study entitled "Key competencies, 'learning how to learn', and 'entrepreneurship' in the primary education in the Republic of Croatia" (Jokić et al., 2007), an analysis has been conducted on to what extent are entrepreneurial competences present in the document titled Educational Plan and Program for primary schools (Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, 2006). The starting point was the introductory part of the general document and the plans and programs of some selected subjects in which these activities, according to the authors, are found most often in European curricula: Science Education (Nature and Society), Technical Education and Geography. It was concluded that, although the introductory part of the Curriculum for primary school entrepreneurship competences does not explicitly mention them, a range of personality traits and specific skills are highlighted and they can be identified as elements of the concept of entrepreneurship in education. However, in the review of programs of individual subjects, the authors have come up with less favourable conclusions: "... one gets the impression that these themes and concepts focus on content units in the narrow sense of specific knowledge. In other words, themes and formulated educational achievements of examined curricula for Science Education, Technical Education and Geography do not mention the development of skills and competencies, including entrepreneurship competences. In this sense, formulated objectives that have been identified as related to some elements of the development of entrepreneurial personality in the introducto-

ry part of the Educational Plan and Program (Curriculum) for primary schools remain unrealized in the development of curricula, and as such have solely declarative value." (Jokić, 2007, p. 40).

Despite the fact that entrepreneurial knowledge at that time was not a part of primary school curriculum, therefore it was not systematically taught in primary schools in Croatia, the authors of the aforementioned study (Jokić et al., 2007) sought to address the issue of students' understanding of some basic concepts related to entrepreneurship. It has been determined that the majority of eighth-grade students did not learn the basic concepts of entrepreneurship.

Subsequent analysis titled "Representation of entrepreneurial content in secondary schools" (Elezović et al., 2012) conducted in 2011 with the aim of determining the (non) existence of the target enterprise content, and to simultaneously investigate the awareness and attitudes of students and teachers of secondary schools towards entrepreneurship. Based on the results, the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education and University College of Economics, Entrepreneurship and Management "Nikola Šubić Zrinski" plan to develop recommendations and guidelines for the systematic introduction of teaching entrepreneurship in secondary education. An analysis of curricula for senior grades in high schools: grammar school, vocational and art schools which was implemented using content analysis method showed that the prevalence of entrepreneurial content is at the moment very low. The authors report that entrepreneurship as a compulsory subject occurs in 8% of the sampled schools, and entrepreneurship keyword is mentioned in only 15.4% of curricula in a number of economics subjects.

In terms of student results, determined on the basis of objective criteria and subjective evaluation, the authors state the following: "Total results for awareness of entrepreneurial content is under expected average." "Students evaluate their theoretical and practical knowledge of entrepreneurial regions in the Republic of Croatia as below average" (Elezović et al., 2012, p. 44).

Conclusion of the above mentioned analysis is that the results of the study "... indicate the current status and acknowledge the need for systematic inclusion of entrepreneurial learning in order to create competitive workforce that is able to respond to the challenges of self-realization of each individual in terms of modern global competition." (Elezović et al., 2012, p. 43).

Since both the aforementioned analyses have been published several years ago, one before the adoption of the Strategy (primary schools), and the other at the middle of its application (secondary schools), at the end of the five-year period of its validity, the need arises for evaluating its performance and identifying to what extent have the desired effects been achieved.

Since education is one of the key components of entrepreneurial environment, primary, secondary and tertiary education are continually evaluated with regard to their contribution to the creation of entrepreneurship competences, in a research conducted by the Centre for Small and Medium Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Development Policy each year, which is presented in the report: "What makes Croatia (non) entrepreneurial country?" (Singer et al., 2011). In these studies in ten-year period (2002 - 2011), regarding the contribution of education to entrepreneurial skills of people, Croatia had been below or at best at the average with monitored countries, so-called GEM countries (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor). In the data for the year 2011 among the ten lowest graded statements as much as two were related to primary and secondary education, and read: "Primary and secondary school education pays adequate attention to entrepreneurship and opening of new businesses" and "Primary and secondary school education provides adequate knowledge of market economy principles." Therefore, among the recommendations of the aforementioned study it has been pointed out that the formal education system should pro-

vide an appropriate education for the acquisition of such competence during formal education, from primary school to university.

The Report on Small and Medium Enterprises in Croatia in 2013, including GEM research results for Croatia in 2012 (Alpeza et al., 2013), indicates a slight increase in the perception of the quality of entrepreneurial education at the primary and secondary level of education when compared to 2011 (on a scale from 1 to 5, the average score rose from 1.88 in 2011 to 1.95 in 2012), but Croatia still remains below the average for the countries included in the GEM research, whose average was 2.03 in 2011 and 2.05 in 2012. The authors conclude, when it comes to primary education in Croatia, entrepreneurship is only sporadically mentioned in the curriculum and is promoted depending on the preferences and knowledge of the teacher and/or principal.

It should be specially emphasized that in the meantime we have witnessed a series of notable efforts in the development of entrepreneurial learning, by schools themselves, as well as a number of other interested organizations and experts. Their efforts towards the development, testing and implementation of entrepreneurship learning programs and development of instruments for monitoring and evaluating programs are visible, manuals and various professional materials are being produced, thematic conferences are being organized, teacher training is periodically being implemented, various researches are conducted and projects applied, there is a continuation with already implemented activities such as entrepreneurial weeks for preschool institutions, primary and secondary schools, students' cooperatives, training firms, presentations, festivals and fairs, and other significant activities aimed at teaching entrepreneurship in preschools, primary and secondary schools, as well as at higher education institutions. It is reasonable, however, to raise the question of to what extent have the individual activities planned by the Strategy "reached" schools and teachers who are expected to systematically and effectively implement a quality education for entrepreneurship in everyday educational practice.

2. Purpose, objectives and hypotheses of the paper

The main purpose of this paper, at the end of the five year period of the Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning 2010-2014, is to evaluate the extent to which the objectives and activities outlined in the Strategy, and measures, targets and actions from the Action Plan, in parts relating to primary education, have been implemented and realized.

In relation to the basic division into three types of evaluation: evaluation of the potential, evaluation of program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, i.e. impact on the target population (Kulenović, 1993), this paper primarily focuses on the evaluation of the implementation of the Strategy (whether and in what degree has the planned been achieved), and partly on the evaluation of its outcomes (whether and at what level have the desired effects been achieved).

The objective of the research were as follows:

1. To examine the extent to which, according to principals, at the primary school system and primary schools themselves certain goals and actions outlined in the Strategy have been achieved - *implementation of certain elements of the Strategy*
2. To establish the extent to which, according to principals, expected results are being achieved within educational work and to which extent are students' entrepreneurship competences prescribed by the Strategy being developed (personality traits, attitudes, knowledge and skills) - *students' entrepreneurial achievements*.

The following hypotheses have been defined for the aforementioned objectives:

1. Individual objectives and activities outlined in the Strategy, and measures, targets and actions from the Action Plan relating to primary education have not been achieved, or have been realized on a small scale.
2. Effects in schools and achievement of primary school students planned by the Strategy have not been realized or have been realized on a small scale.

3. Data collection and processing methodology

3.1. Formation of the sample and data collection

In the Republic of Croatia in 2013/2014 school year there was a total of 887 primary schools (Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, 2014). The study refers to the primary schools using regular curriculum, founded by the Republic of Croatia, i.e. regional and local government units, while private and religious schools, and also schools for students with disabilities, have not been included because of their organizational and (potential) program specificity in the research. Therefore, pursuant to the purpose of this paper, total population is comprised of 849 general Croatian primary schools, i.e. their principals who were the source of data for this research.

In order to achieve proportional territorial structure of the sample, in the formation of the sample we used stratification according to regional characteristics. We have used two regional divisions: division into five regions: Southern Croatia or Dalmatia, Western Croatia or Istria and Kvarner, Eastern Croatia or Slavonia, Northern Croatia and Central Croatia, and the division into three NUTS 2 statistical regions: North-West, East or Pannonian and South or the Adriatic region. Within the North-West region there are six counties (Zagreb, Krapina-Zagorje, Varaždin, Koprivnica-Križevci and Međimurje County and the City of Zagreb), Eastern region includes eight counties (Bjelovar-Bilogora, Virovitica-Podravina, Požega-Slavonia, Slavonski Brod-Posavina, Osijek-Baranja, Vukovar-Srijem, Karlovac and Sisak-Moslavina County), while Southern region includes seven counties (Istria, Primorje-Gorski Kotar, Lika-Senj, Zadar, Šibenik-Knin, Split-Dalmatia and Dubrovnik-Neretva County). The division into three NUTS 2 regions is in line with the criteria of the European Union's regional policy of balanced economic development and incentives through the Structural Funds, and such division was adopted in the negotiations during Croatian accession into the European Union and is incorporated into the Regional Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia 2011-2013 (Ministry of Regional Development, Forestry and Water Management, 2010).¹ Although since then there has been no consensus on the regional division of the Republic of Croatia, this regional division is often used since NUTS 2 regions to some extent represent comparable units based on population size, homogeneity of statistical units, natural geographical features and historical tradition. (Lovrinčević, Marić and Rajh, 2005).

¹ According to European Nomenclature of spatial units for statistics (French: "Nomenclature des unités territoriales statistiques" - NUTS) the entire area of the European Union is divided into spatial units (statistical units) at several levels: NUTS1, NUTS 2 and NUTS 3. Pursuant to classification, NUTS 2 level is made of areas with at least 800 thousands to a maximum of 3 million inhabitants. The aim is to allow balanced collection of comparable statistical data which are used as a basis for implementing cohesion policy of the EU since structural fund users are not member states in their entirety, but individual regions at NUTS 2 level provided they meet the criteria emanating from statistical parameters, for example, under-average BDP per capita at NUTS 2 region level.

Using random selection, at least 50% of appropriate counties have been included from each of the regions. The sample was thus comprised of primary school principals from Dubrovnik-Neretva, Istria, Karlovac, Koprivnica-Križevci, Krapina-Zagorje, Lika-Senj, Zadar, Međimurje, Osijek-Baranja, Primorje-Gorski Kotar, Split-Dalmatia, Virovitica-Podravina, Vukovar-Srijem and Zagreb County and the City of Zagreb. In each of the participating counties, heads of county expert councils² have, in accordance with pre-agreed procedure, conducted surveys with primary school principals in their territory during official meetings to which all principals had been invited (in a minority of cases through the official e-mail correspondence), which minimizes the possibility of some unwanted systematic factor affecting the structure of the sample. The anonymity of participants was respected, as promised.

Using the aforementioned combination of stratified, random and convenience (indiscriminate) sampling we achieved, as presented in Table 1, the appropriate structure of the sample according to school size, settlement size and regional affiliation, as variables with assumed effect on research results. In terms of size, the sample consisted of a total of 271 principals and is close to one-third (31.9 %) of the total number of primary school principals in the Republic of Croatia.

Table 1. Sample structure by school size, settlement size and regional affiliation

Variable	The share of participants in the sample	
	f	%
School size according to number of students		
Up to 200	81	29.9
Up to 400	83	30.6
Up to 600	61	22.5
Up to 800	30	11.1
More than 800	16	5.9
Total	271	100.0
Settlement size according to population		
Up to 2,000	69	25.6
Up to 5,000	75	27.8
Up to 10,000	30	11.1
Up to 50,000	41	15.2
Up to 100,000	21	7.8
more than 100,000	34	12.6
Total	270	100.0
No data	1	
Region		
North-West	92	33.9
Pannonian	100	36.9
Adriatic	79	29.2
Total	271	100.0

² Includes heads of County Assemblies: Mirjana Bazijanec, Davorka Deur, Vinko Grgić, Zdenko Ilečić, Marica Jurčić, Biserka Matić-Roško, Lidija Miletić, Željko Modrić, Božena Nikoletić, Davorka Parmać, Zoran Pavletić, Jadranka Sabljak, Sanjica Samac, Božena Slunjski and Marijana Štimac, to whom we wish to thank for their help in conducting this questionnaire.

3.2. Questionnaire used and contained variables

Since the aim of this study was to find out whether concrete objectives and activities of the Strategy have been implemented and achieved near the end of the five-year period, a specially drafted questionnaire was used. The questionnaire is based on a review of the Strategy and appropriate Action Plan and the selection of those tasks of the Strategy, i.e. goals and activities of the Action Plan, which relate to primary school system, or the system of formal education, including primary education, under the authority of competent Ministry of Science, Education and Sports as a single holder or in conjunction with associated Education and Teacher Training Agency.

Creating a dedicated instrument, without prior normative data, is necessary and justified “when it comes to specialized programs conducted on specific categories of clients for whose features there is simply no appropriate measurement procedures.” (Kulenović, 1993, p. 286). Before the implementation of the survey, the questionnaire was provisionally applied with an aim of achieving appropriate formulations and selection of appropriate items, while its factorization is omitted in line with the objectives of this study, since the aim was to examine the extent to which, in the opinion of school principals, each of planned elements of the Strategy has been achieved.

The questionnaire is titled “Questionnaire on the implementation of the National Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning 2010-2014” and it contains 24 items relating to selected goals, tasks and activities of the Strategy and the Action Plan, in part relating to teaching entrepreneurship in primary education. They can be grouped into the following four logically connected categories pertaining to the following variables (items in the questionnaire):

1. objectives / activities that should have been implemented at the level of the education system (8 items): management education, teacher training, compilation and publication of curriculum, teachers' involvement in curriculum, establishment of a system for the exchange of experiences, web portals, drafting manuals and textbooks, development of didactic and methodological materials
2. objectives / activities that should have been realized at the level of schools (8 items): the availability of necessary training for teachers, the opportunity for students to participate in the cooperative, at school cooperatives fair, in training firm, at training firm fair, achieved cooperation between schools and scientific institutions, cooperation with businesses and local community, and the cooperation and networking between schools on program development
3. achieved expected outcomes (improvements / effects) in schools (4 items): realization of teachers' motivation, establishment of an atmosphere of “entrepreneurial school”, systematic implementation of curricular and extracurricular activities for entrepreneurship, achievement of significant quantitative and qualitative changes in teaching entrepreneurship
4. actual outcomes (competencies) for students (4 items): development of personality traits associated with entrepreneurship, adopting attitudes about the importance of entrepreneurial orientation to life and professional development, adopting ways of thinking, knowledge and skills needed for starting entrepreneurial ventures, acquisition of basic economic, market and financial knowledge

Participants were asked to give their assessment of the rate in which each individual claim or item in the questionnaire has been achieved using Likert scale of five points: 1, no; 2, to a lesser degree yes; 3, partially yes; 4, mostly yes and 5, yes.

Although these results are not the subject of this paper, the principals have been asked, through the following 13 items of the Questionnaire, about further improvements of entrepreneurship learning as follows:

5. what should be provided to primary education system in the future to support the successful entrepreneurship learning in primary schools (5 items)
6. how should, in their opinion, entrepreneurial content and learning be implemented in primary schools (8 items)

The methodological limitations of the study could stem from the fact that it relies on estimates of the participants. However, we used available expert sources of information containing objective facts about the realization of the Strategy and the Action Plan (principals are educational managers of schools authorized for the functioning of the overall educational endeavour and for the development and educational activities of the school), and even the share of their personal impressions in essence does not reduce the practical significance of the results of applied research, since both have an impact on the entrepreneurial activity in schools, which is the main subject of this paper. Although the Strategy is educationally and socially, and even economically, extremely important document, so far, according to our knowledge, evaluation studies have not been published. "Even checks made with modest means, using the weaker methodological framework may have great significance if the area or specific task lacks in appropriate quality indicators. The worst solution is systematically avoiding any evaluation and continuing with works on the basis of elusive and "intuitive" ideas and hopes regarding its effectiveness." (Kulenović, 1993, p. 291).

3.3. Analysis of results

Data analysis was performed using the SPSS computer program. In this paper, in accordance with set evaluation questions, the emphasis is on descriptive indicators and absolute and relative frequencies and arithmetic mean and standard deviations were calculated and presented graphically and in tables for each of the items.

4. Results presentation and discussion

Authors of the study "Key competencies 'learning how to learn' and 'entrepreneurship' in the primary education in the Republic of Croatia", which was published before the incorporation of entrepreneurship competencies in the National Curriculum Framework predicted, since the very concept is undefined and unexplored and since the instruments for measuring and monitoring development of entrepreneurship competencies at the primary education level do not exist, that "... the introduction of entrepreneurship competencies in primary schools is actually a case of one political decision slowly being translated into the language of education, teaching and learning. It will take considerable time for these political decisions to be translated into effective methods for teaching and learning on the one hand, and into quality measurement and analysis on the other." (Jokić, 2007, p. 26).

Although, of course, it could have been assumed that the goals, objectives and actions outlined in the Strategy and the Action Plan, regarding primary education, will not be fully met, the results suggest that in general they have not been realized at all or have been realized in a very small extent.

Table 2 contains opinions of school principals on progress made in the implementation of objectives, tasks and activities set forth in the Strategy and the Action Plan at the level of primary school system. With very high frequency of “no” responses and “to a lesser degree yes”, principals have almost unanimously, with very low average scores, claimed that in the previous five years basic program and didactic requirements had not been met. Their responses indicate that curriculum for entrepreneurship had not been developed and published (84.0% of answers “no” and “to a lesser degree yes”; $M = 1.49$), furthermore, there are no manuals and textbooks (88.1%, $M = 1.48$), other didactic and methodical materials (88.4%, $M = 1.43$), and announced web portal (87.9%, $M = 1.45$).

We think that the current situation, in which learning for entrepreneurship as a cross-curricular theme is left without any elaboration within National Curriculum Framework and program design is left to schools and teachers, is not sustainable and satisfactory result cannot be expected, especially given the fact that other necessary requirements have not been met. As highlighted by some authors, “it is absurd that the Educational Plan and Program for primary schools does not include any content related to entrepreneurship” (Babić and Šitum, 2013, p.34), while the National Curriculum Framework emphasizes entrepreneurial competences among the relevant learning outcomes (competencies). This shortcoming has been empirically proved by the aforementioned analyzes of representation of entrepreneurship content in curricula for primary and secondary schools (Jokić, 2007, Elezović, 2012).

Another poorly ranked item is implementation of educational activities: training of school managers (78.2% of predominantly negative responses, $M = 1.67$), teacher education (82.7%, $M = 1.65$) and involvement of teachers in curriculum development (81.9%, $M = 1.61$). Slightly better score, at the level of the average score of “to a lesser degree yes” is seen for the established system of exchange of good practice (68.2%, $M = 2.00$). Although, given the above, that may be the result of a planned and systematic work on achieving objectives and activities of the Strategy, such results could also emanate from the needs of the schools and the teachers themselves to, in the absence of necessary programs, materials, training and instruction, help each other by exchanging useful information.

According to the data presented in Table 3, principals have stated that even at the level of schools themselves the objectives and activities of the Strategy have been achieved at a very low level.

As accepted and in practice quite prevalent type of learning for entrepreneurship, the highest graded was given to students’ opportunity to participate in school cooperative ($M = 2.54$) and the participation of teachers and students at school cooperatives fair ($M = 2.35$). Responses for these statements are dichotomized, which stems from the fact that a part of primary schools have school cooperative, while others do not. Unlike secondary schools, where the same are more pervasive, it is clear that most primary schools have no organized training firms ($M = 1.25$), and that students and teachers are involved at training firms fairs in a very small extent ($M = 1.35$).

In the Croatian educational system school cooperatives are one aspect of the so-called extra-curricular activities in which it is possible to achieve the development of entrepreneurship com-

Table 2. Achievement of objectives and activities prescribed by the Strategy and the Action Plan at the level of primary education system (as graded by school principals)

Objectives / Activities	N	Grade (f)					Grade (%)					M	σ
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		
		f	f	f	f	f	%	%	%	%	%		
1 - school management received the training in entrepreneurship curriculum implementation	271	163	49	46	12	1	60.1	18.1	17.0	4.4	0.4	1.67	0.935
2 - teachers received training in the application of appropriate teaching methods for the development of entrepreneurship competences	271	162	62	29	16	2	59.8	22.9	10.7	5.9	0.7	1.65	0.942
3 - entrepreneurship curriculum for primary education has been drafted and published	270	191	36	34	8	1	70.7	13.3	12.6	3.0	0.4	1.49	0.852
4 - a system of teachers' participation in developing curriculum and designing teaching activities has been established	271	171	51	37	9	3	63.1	18.8	13.7	3.3	1.1	1.61	0.920
5 - a system for the exchange of experiences and good practices has been developed	271	121	64	57	24	5	44.6	23.6	21.0	8.9	1.8	2.00	1.087
6 - web portal for entrepreneurship learning has been developed	266	190	44	21	11	0	71.4	16.5	7.9	4.1	0.0	1.45	0.810
7 - manuals and textbooks have been drafted	269	184	53	23	7	2	68.4	19.7	8.6	2.6	0.7	1.48	0.817
8 - other didactic and methodical materials have been drafted	269	190	48	24	7	0	70.6	17.8	8.9	2.6	0.0	1.43	0.763

Chart 1. Achievement of objectives and activities prescribed by the Strategy and the Action Plan at the level of primary education system - arithmetic mean scores (range 1-5)

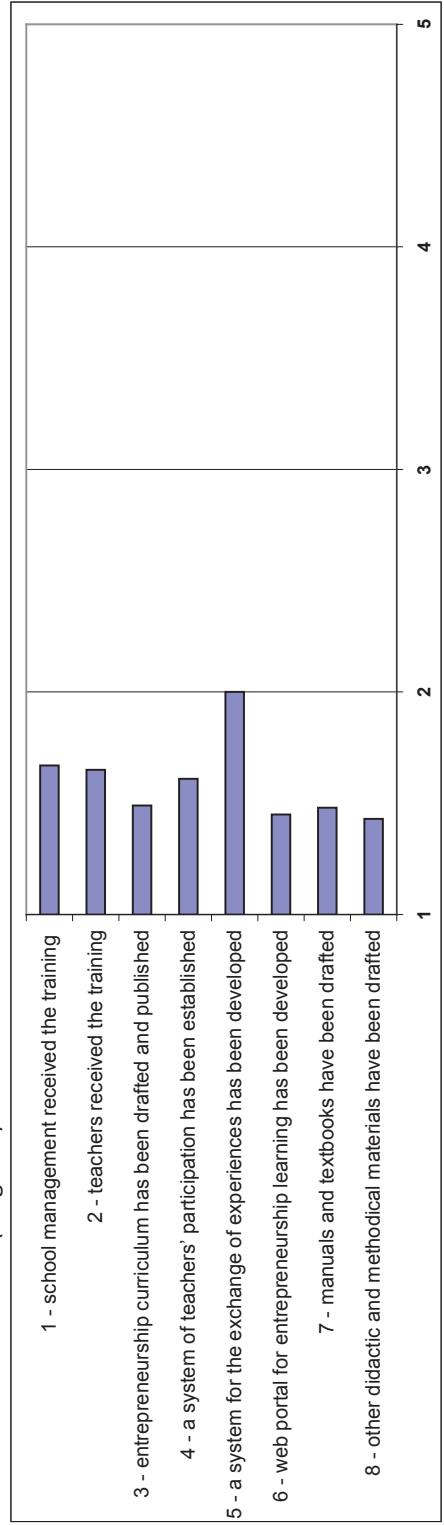
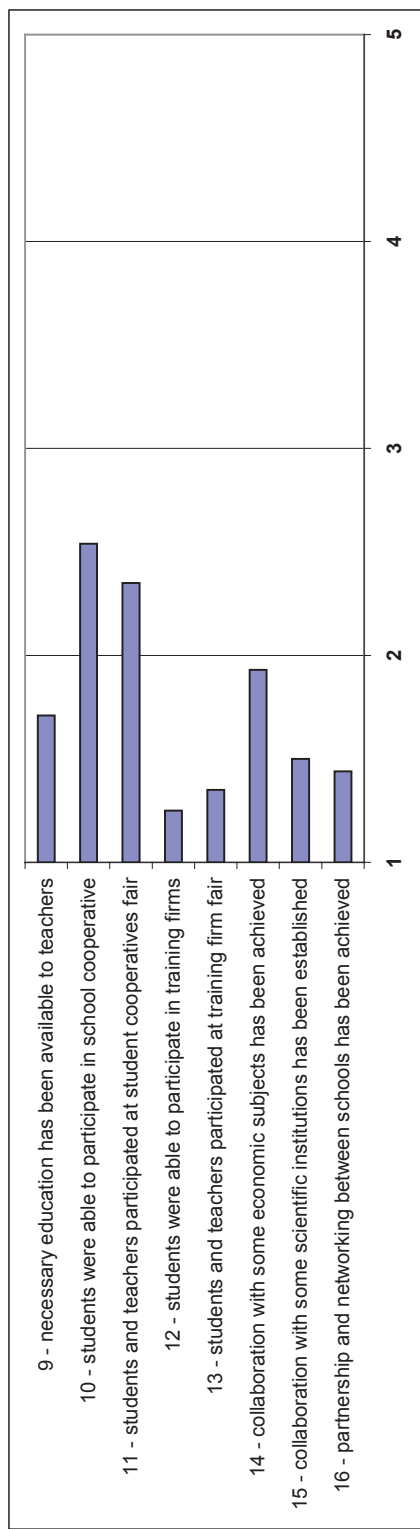


Table 3. Achievement of objectives and activities prescribed by the Strategy and the Action Plan at the level of schools (as graded by school principals)

Objectives / Activities	N	Grade (f)										Grade (%)					M	σ
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		
		f	f	f	f	f	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%		
9 - necessary education for the development of entrepreneurship competences in students has been available to teachers	271	148	74	32	14	3	54.6	27.3	11.8	5.2	1.1	1.71	0.943					
10 - students are able to participate in school cooperative	270	137	16	24	19	74	50.7	5.9	8.9	7.0	27.4	2.54	1.749					
11 - students and teachers participated at student cooperatives fair	270	147	16	32	16	59	54.4	5.9	11.9	5.9	21.9	2.35	1.660					
12 - students were able to participate in training firms	269	229	23	9	6	2	85.1	8.6	3.3	2.2	0.7	1.25	0.692					
13 - students and teachers participated at training firm fair	269	217	26	12	11	3	80.7	9.7	4.5	4.1	1.1	1.35	0.836					
14 - collaboration between schools and some economic subjects on entrepreneurship learning programs has been achieved	270	139	62	34	20	15	51.5	23.0	12.6	7.4	5.6	1.93	1.199					
15 - collaboration between schools and scientific research institutions on entrepreneurship learning programs has been achieved	269	196	37	18	10	8	72.3	13.7	6.6	3.7	3.0	1.50	0.984					
16 - partnership and networking between schools on the development of entrepreneurship learning programs has been achieved	270	209	26	22	4	9	77.1	9.6	8.1	1.5	3.3	1.44	0.949					

Chart 2. Achievement of objectives and activities prescribed by the Strategy and the Action Plan at the level of schools - arithmetic mean scores (range 1-5)



petences. School cooperatives in Croatia have a long and rich tradition since the 1950s (Bučar 2008, according to Babić and Šitum, 2013). In the Educational Plan and Program (curriculum) for primary schools from 2006, the notion of school cooperatives implies farms, household, bee-keeping, basic crocheting, embroidery and knitting techniques, decorating school gardens and similar. School cooperatives have so far placed an emphasis on the specific knowledge and skills in technological areas (Elezović, 2012), but are always production-market orientation and strive to achieve economic success (Bučar 2008, according to Babić and Šitum, 2013) with an emphasis of work being the means and the goal of education, and according to the new definition of the competences by the curriculum, school cooperatives can have and do have an important function in the field of entrepreneurial development of students.

Training firms are organizational forms used in teaching by which “in the performance of real business processes and simulated circulation of goods, services and money the acquisition of competences necessary for self-management sectors, and management of small and medium enterprises are ensured (Tafra, 2011, according to Elezović, 2012, p. 30).

The aforementioned research on awareness and attitudes of secondary school students on entrepreneurial topics (Elezović et al., 2012) showed that significantly more informed are the students of those schools that have additional economic activity: school cooperatives, training firms, or both. The same study found that twice and more secondary school students stated that in their school student training firms are organized as a part of entrepreneurship related activities, while school cooperatives are not prevalent.

In terms of cooperation on entrepreneurship learning programs, it can be concluded that results are very modest: collaboration between schools and businesses and the local community is realized on a small scale ($M = 1.93$), cooperation with scientific institutions is even rarer ($M = 1, 50$), and, unfortunately, cooperation and networking of schools for the purposes of developing and implementing entrepreneurship learning programs is also at low levels ($M = 1.44$). The question referred to the cooperation not only between primary schools, but also with secondary schools, since cooperation with secondary schools and teachers of appropriate profile could significantly enhance entrepreneurial programs in primary schools and their performance.

It has already been stated that, in the opinion of principals, teachers are not offered appropriate training (Table 2), and now it is clear that such training has not even been available ($M = 1.71$, Table 3). It seems that the situation has insufficiently changed in comparison to the findings of the study from 2007: “In addition, a large percentage of respondents (69%) believed that teachers in their schools are not adequately trained for teaching entrepreneurship. When assessing aspects of training that are considered most useful for teaching entrepreneurship competences, teachers have usually claimed that they need training which would allow them to acquire knowledge in the field of entrepreneurship (76%), and to master the appropriate teaching methods and skills (39%)” (Jokić et al., 2007, p. 80).

Other studies have also found inadequate training of teachers for the development of students’ entrepreneurship competences and have emphasized the need for the improvement of the current situation (Domović, Baranović and Štibrić, 2007).

The justification, but also the necessity of investing in human resources and a positive coherency between education and productivity no longer needs to be proven, but systematic and comprehensive education of school professionals, planned by the Strategy, has not been adequately implemented.

The most commonly used concepts of entrepreneurship education are education “about”, “for” or “through, using” entrepreneurship (Oberman Peterka, 2013). Some of these categories mean the following: education *about* entrepreneurship - the goal is to understand entrepreneurship and its role in society, with an emphasis on the acquisition of theoretical knowledge about entrepreneurship; education *for* entrepreneurship - the goal is to train the students for starting and managing business enterprises with an emphasis on the practical entrepreneurial skills; education through entrepreneurship - the goal is to develop an entrepreneurial mindset and behaviour, where the outcome is an enterprising individual with adopted entrepreneurial competences and values. There is also an education *in* entrepreneurship - which aims to enable businesses to manage growth and development of businesses, with a focus on existing businesses where the outcome is the entrepreneurial potential of growth and development (Sedlan-König, 2012, according to Mujanović, 2013).

Among the teachers there are differences with regard to the concept of entrepreneurship education: teachers about entrepreneurship that convey theoretical knowledge differ from teachers for entrepreneurship that should have certain personal business experience, or teachers who teach through entrepreneurship, leading students through entrepreneurial activity. It is believed that in Croatia high number of higher education professors teach entrepreneurship without having any experience in entrepreneurship which places even a greater emphasis on the need for education, training and development of teachers in the field of entrepreneurship education (Oberman Peterka, 2013).

Undoubtedly, this is also the case with primary school teachers, especially since their profession is not associated with entrepreneurship, but they still need to teach it as a cross-curricular theme.

From the above, recommendations have been drawn to the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports for the development of a detailed pedagogical framework for entrepreneurship education at various levels of education (Oberman Peterka, 2013).

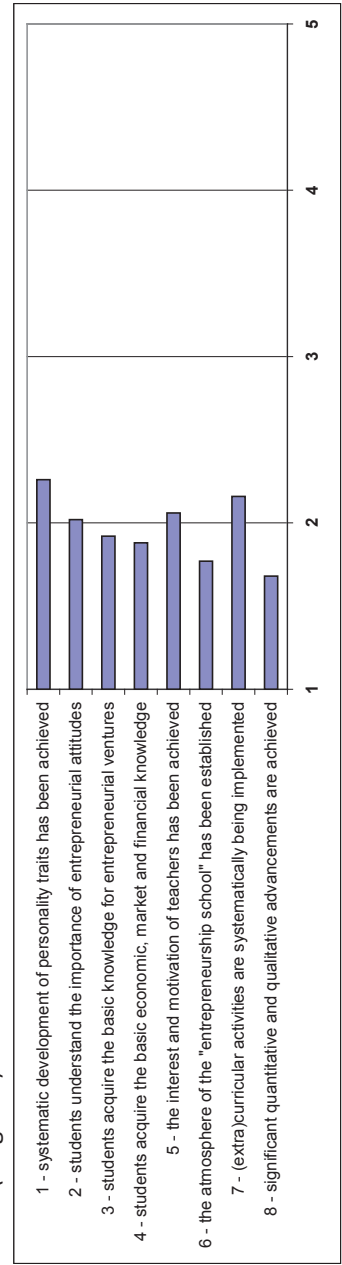
It is reasonable to ask to what extent is it realistically to expect that a large proportion of teachers can acquire the necessary competence at the desired level through targeted professional development, and thus become adequately and comprehensively trained in the development of entrepreneurship competences of children. “We need to acknowledge the undisputed fact that the teachers who, by their personal characteristics, are not inclined to entrepreneurship, and majority of teachers are like that, will rarely develop appropriate competences needed for the development of entrepreneurship competences in students.

Therefore, the concept that everyone will contribute something in his/her subject, and that such practice will produce desirable outcomes, is very doubtful.” (Vojnović and Manojlović, 2011, p. 72). Therefore, in our opinion, learning about entrepreneurship should, inter alia, also partially be implemented by specialized teachers, through various forms of extracurricular activities. This recommendation has already been stated (Vojnović and Manojlović, 2011) because of the possibility that, as a cross-curricular, entrepreneurship content will in practice be processed fragmentally, and not systematically, which is why it is proposed that at least once during their primary education (preferably in the seventh grade, partly due to the psychological and developmental characteristics in that age, partly because of the matching with professional information activities) all students receive a well-rounded and holistic learning program for entrepreneurship, either continuously throughout the year, one semester or concentrated over a few weeks.

Table 4. Achievement of objectives and activities prescribed by the Strategy in schools and among students themselves (as graded by school principals)

Realized outcomes	N	Grade (f)					Grade (%)					M	σ	
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5			
		f	f	f	f	f	%	%	%	%	%			
For students:														
1 - systematic development of personality traits related to entrepreneurship is achieved	271	74	87	85	15	10	27.3	32.1	31.4	5.5	3.7	2.26	1.037	
2 - students understand the importance of entrepreneurial attitudes, knowledge and skills for their personal and professional development	271	105	84	59	18	5	38.7	31.0	21.8	6.6	1.8	2.02	1.020	
3 - students acquire the basic knowledge and skills needed for starting and managing entrepreneurial ventures	271	113	87	55	12	4	41.7	32.1	20.3	4.4	1.5	1.92	0.963	
4 - students acquire and use the basic economic, market and financial knowledge and skills	271	111	99	48	9	4	41.0	36.5	17.7	3.3	1.5	1.88	0.917	
In the schools:														
5 - the interest and motivation of teachers for the inclusion of entrepreneurship learning in the educational process has been achieved	271	102	74	76	16	3	37.6	27.3	28.0	5.9	1.1	2.06	0.997	
6 - the atmosphere of the so-called "entrepreneurship school" which promotes and develops entrepreneurial thinking has been established	271	140	69	49	10	3	51.7	25.5	18.1	3.7	1.1	1.77	0.946	
7 - curricular and extracurricular activities aiming at the development of entrepreneurship competences are systematically being implemented	269	108	63	60	24	14	40.1	23.4	22.3	8.9	5.2	2.16	1.196	
8 - significant quantitative and qualitative advancements in learning for entrepreneurship have been achieved	270	139	86	37	8	0	51.5	31.9	13.7	3.0	0.0	1.68	0.819	

Chart 3. Outcomes of objectives and activities prescribed by the Strategy in schools and among students themselves - arithmetic mean scores (range 1-5)



Following the previously presented assessment of the degree to which objectives set by the Strategy have been implemented, results presented in Table 4 are not surprising, according to which school principals have in a very small number of cases considered that an atmosphere of “entrepreneurship school” that encourages, supports and develops entrepreneurship values and way of thinking has been established or has been largely established (77.2% mainly negative and 4.8% positive responses, $M = 1.77$). Also, in most cases (83.4%, $M = 1.68$) participants believed that the educational system has not achieved significant quantitative and qualitative changes in terms of entrepreneurship learning and development of entrepreneurship competences in students. At a slightly higher level, though far from satisfactory, they graded the degree of motivation of teachers for the inclusion of entrepreneurship learning in the educational process ($M = 2.06$) although, given the above, the question can be raised as to which extent has that been a result of planned and systematic effort towards realization of goals set by the Strategy, and to what extent does that result stem teachers’ characteristics and efforts.

From Table 4 it is clear that the systematic implementation of curricular and extracurricular activities that serve entrepreneurship learning have largely or fully been implemented in only 14.1% of schools, and partly implemented in another 22.3% of schools, which certainly constitutes a low score ($M = 2.16$), but can be considered partially satisfactory with respect to inappropriately organized conditions mentioned in the tables above (Tables 2 and 3).

Actual outcomes achieved by the students are also evaluated as low, which relates to all aspects of entrepreneurship competences: entrepreneurship personality traits, entrepreneurship attitudes and entrepreneurship knowledge and skills in economic and entrepreneurial areas. Relatively best results, according to estimates by principals, had been achieved in the systematic development of the personality traits associated with entrepreneurship, such as independence, initiative, creativity, reasonable risk-taking and other ($M = 2.26$), which is a demand derived from the Educational Plan and Program (Curriculum) for primary schools, and not only from the objectives of the Strategy and the National Curriculum Framework. Lower levels of attainment has been achieved in student understanding and adopting entrepreneurship attitudes important for professional development and career planning ($M = 2.02$), even lower score has been achieved in the acquisition of thinking, knowledge and skills for starting and managing businesses ($M = 1.92$), while the lowest average score was the acquisition and usage of basic economic concepts and market and financial principles ($M = 1.88$).

In a paper that has “timely” dealt with the expected limitations in the implementation of the Learning for Entrepreneurship Strategy and the National Curriculum Framework (Vojnović and Manojlović, 2011), model for predicting job performance developed by Sherman, Bohlander and Chruden (“can” x “will” = achieve; $1 \times 1 = 1$) was used after upgrades by the authors, in which their original “formula” was extended by two factors: “a fraction” is multiplied by the conditions provided to teachers for that purpose and then divided by the expectations that have been placed on the teachers regarding entrepreneurship learning results. By introducing “expectations” in the denominator of the original fraction the authors wanted to warn that with excessive expectations (more than 1) even the teachers with who had already achieved high competence for entrepreneurship learning (“can” x “will”), and the question is how many teachers have achieved that, will not be able to achieve the desired result. Similarly, by multiplying the fraction with “conditions”, if suitable conditions are not created and are much lower (less than 1), the authors wish to warn that neither the teachers who “can” and “will” will not be able to overcome them. On that occasion a concern was expressed that the level of expectation in terms of entrepreneurship learning

placed in front of the teachers by society and the educational system is very high, while "... with regard to conditions: resources (time, resources, materials), organizational solutions and permanent professional and other support, the aforementioned documents, except to some extent in the part relating to training, are not promising enough." (Vojnović and Manojlović, 2011, p. 71).

Now, based on the empirical results presented in this paper, it can be concluded that the fear was only partially justified, since the implementation of the Strategy has been inadequate in both the terms of professional development and in the terms of curriculum. It was impossible to assume that during a nearly five-year period since the introduction of the National Curriculum Framework and the Strategy curriculum/program for learning about entrepreneurship will not be developed, to which principals warn with their low grades.

5. Conclusion

Near the end of the five-year period since the adoption of Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning 2010-2014 and the associated Action Plan for the period from 2010 to 2014, and the same amount of time since the adoption of the National Curriculum Framework for Pre-school Education and General Primary and Secondary Education, it is necessary to evaluate whether the planned measures and activities have been implemented and, more importantly, whether desired effects have been achieved in schools and among students.

Although the systematic evaluation requires complete objective data that has been systematically obtained, for the purposes of this study we relied on estimates by primary school principals, who, as pedagogical leaders, are authoritative source of information on implemented and achieved goals of entrepreneurship learning in primary schools.

Taking into account the methodological barriers related to the use of subjective and one-time (summative) assessments, given the sample size (one third of the total population of primary school principals in the Republic of Croatia) and the representativeness of the sample, in response to set hypothesis we can conclude the following:

1. The largest number of measures, objectives and activities planned by the Strategy for primary education has not been achieved, i.e. it has been achieved in a very small extent.

At the level of the primary school system that equally applies to offered and completed education for school principals and teachers, appropriate web portal for learning about entrepreneurship, manuals and textbooks, other didactic and methodological materials, the system of participation of teachers in curriculum development and ultimately to entrepreneurship curriculum itself, which has not been drafted or published, and the best, although still low, grade was given to the system of exchange of experiences and good practices.

In primary schools, the opportunity to participate in the work of school cooperatives and fairs was the most common opportunity for students to learn about entrepreneurship, while training firms were not nearly as present, and all forms of cooperation in entrepreneurship programs were rated low, with relatively the best but still very low, grades being achieved in the area of co-operation with businesses.

2. Achievements in primary school students provided by the Strategy had been achieved in a very small extent.

In particular, it relates to mastering the fundamentals of economic and entrepreneurship knowledge, skills and mindset, while the views on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurially oriented personality traits had been developed in relatively greater extent, but still insufficiently. Outcomes in schools prescribed by the Strategy have also been achieved in a very small extent. The motivation of teachers and the efforts to systematically implement entrepreneurial learning activity, although at a low level, estimated to be slightly better than the actual realized entrepreneurial "environment" school and achieved significant qualitative and quantitative progress in learning for entrepreneurship, which are very low score.

Strategy for Entrepreneurial Learning 2010-2014 was an important step forward in the introduction and development of entrepreneurship learning, but despite the contribution of a number of institutions and organizations and individual experts, the fact remains that the Action Plan, at least when it comes to primary schools, has not been realized in a planned, systematic and comprehensive way. We have determined low to very low levels of implementation of a number of elements of the planned Strategy and Action Plan, as well as the achieved results in schools and among students, which in future will require significant qualitative and quantitative changes and larger and more organized efforts by the holder and co-holder of that demanding and responsible task in order for desired results to be achieved in this educational area that is of particular individual, social and economic importance. The complexity and importance of the topic requires further applied research, focused on the analysis of the current situation and the development and evaluation of effective educational, organizational, programmatic and didactic-methodical solutions which would allow schools and teachers to implement a planned, systematic and comprehensive work on the development of entrepreneurship competences of students, thus providing expert-scientific foundations and practical guidelines in the area of introducing and improving entrepreneurship learning.

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