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### OUTLOOK

## SUPPORT FOR SES: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

**At the end of the first pilot phase, the Italian partners, Finpiemonte and Fondazione Brodolini, organized an online meeting on March 22, «Support for new SEs: from theory to practice».**

The meeting provided the pilot participants with an overview of all stakeholders involved in the process, priorities and methods of intervention of different types of organisations offering financial support to business projects and local development initiatives which highlight the importance of generating social impact.

The workshop included a training with a group of experts from the public and private financial sector, on the topic of support of social entrepreneurship. Speakers provided tips and suggestions about how to access different funding sources, and listed several upcoming opportunities from both public and private institutions.

Pilot participants improved their understanding of different sources of funding and the processes to obtain resources.

The workshop was also an opportunity for networking, connecting pilot projects' teams with the speakers, and for initiating interactions beneficial prior to upcoming individual meetings with financial stakeholders.

Financial support experts recommended strengthening economic aspects of project proposals as some projects developed throughout the pilot strongly focused on social innovation at the community level, but were deemed weaker when it comes to economic sustainability and business management. Focus should be shifted to the definition of the idea and value proposition, a careful choice of both social and economic objectives that are key for effective fundraising.

The event also stressed the importance of extra-territorial networks. Lastly, financial stakeholders highlighted the importance of creating an ecosystem supporting social enterprises operating in marginalized areas.

« It was very useful for us to attend the workshop, a great opportunity to increase our knowledge of stakeholders/ investors interested in the issues of local development and socially responsible enterprises. »

Cooperativa Germinale

46  
programme  
participants

49 partners  
involved

# PILOT PROGRAM OF SAXONY-ANHALT SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

During a nine-month pilot program, the Development Bank of Saxony-Anhalt and MITZ Merseburg supported young startups - and those who wanted to become founders - in developing their socially innovative ideas into marketable business models, thus creating sustainable solutions for rural areas in Saxony-Anhalt. The aim of the pilot project was to raise awareness about social entrepreneurship, to foster entrepreneurial spirit and to contribute to the establishment of a powerful ecosystem for social entrepreneurs while drawing recommendations for their better support. Additionally, the regional pilot program enabled a process of mutual learning between the pilot participants as well as the involved partners and stakeholders while testing and improving the selected tools of the toolbox developed within the DelFin project ([www.support4SE.eu](http://www.support4SE.eu)).



Photo source: Germinale Cooperativa

The pilot started off with a call for ideas which resulted in 10 selected project ideas starting their pilot program with a kick-off workshop held in July 2020. During the nine-month program, pilot participants participated in group trainings, individual mentoring and coaching sessions, focusing on business modeling and planning; impact measurement; development of individual financing and funding strategy. Within the pilot program, the participants took part in more than 16 modules, each designed as a combination of training and coaching opportunities, to improve their entrepreneurial skills and knowledge. Furthermore, regional stakeholders joined three pilot workshops to provide pilot participants with additional support.

The official ending of the regional pilot program of Saxony-Anhalt was marked by the final pilot workshop on March 11, 2021. This event wrapped up the experiences and lessons learned made within the past nine months: Pilot participants as well as experts and stakeholders discussed findings of the pilot phase and analyzed how to foster social entrepreneurship in Saxony-Anhalt in the future. Especially thematic trainings and coordinated coaching in combination with a need-orientated approach and feedback opportunities during the program have been proven as success factors.

Furthermore, raising awareness, acceptance and potential for collaboration in the field of social entrepreneurship are indispensable for its forthcoming development.

Findings and results of the final workshop and the pilot program will be summarized in the evaluation report and used in the upcoming capacity building seminars, as well as by the interdisciplinary working group on social entrepreneurship in Saxony-Anhalt.

# IMPACT CONFERENCE 2021

The online version of the 2021 Impact Conference was held on April 27 - 28.

<https://www.impactconference.net/>

The conference, dedicated towards connecting actors of positive social impact - socially responsible businesses, investors, foundations, civil society and social enterprises, this year gathered the audiences of two EU Interreg Central Europe projects: Delfin and Ce-Responsible.

The programme focused on the promotion of social entrepreneurship in rural regions, empowering social business in Central Europe, connecting entrepreneurs with social entrepreneurs in nine countries through a developed platform. It touched upon innovative funding concepts (impact investors, foundations, angel investors); creation of a conducive ecosystem; cooperation between impact entrepreneurs / altruistic entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs; digital transformation for social entrepreneurs during Covid-19; supporting social entrepreneurs in inner rural regions, experiences of success (and failure!).

DelFin project outputs were also presented: Support4SE toolbox for promotion of social entrepreneurs, as well as database of resources for social entrepreneurs.



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