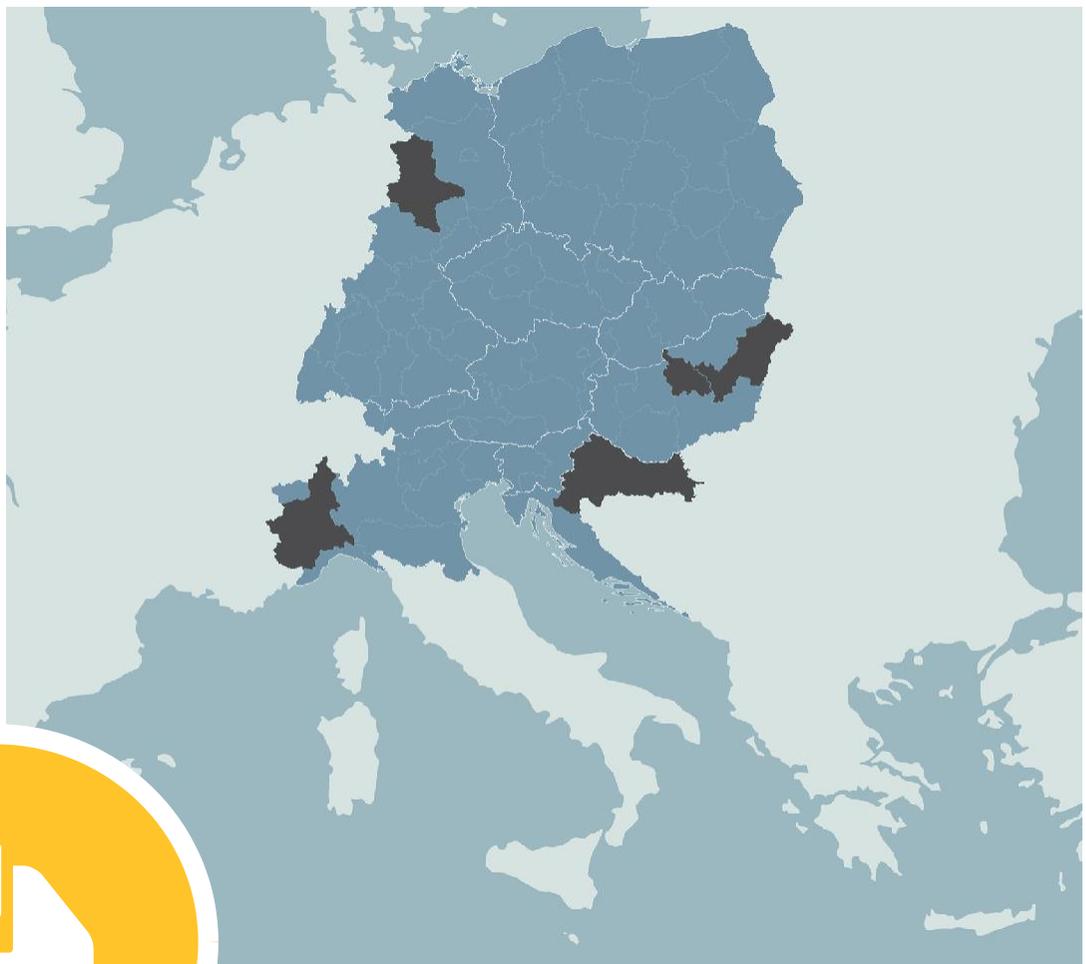


TRANSNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR PROMOTION OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN RURAL REGIONS

Insights, Learning, Inspiration

Version 2
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1. INTRODUCTION

DelFin project in a nutshell

European rural regions are facing several societal challenges, especially an ageing population, brain drain and unemployment. Social innovation becomes more important for developing solutions that are sustainable. There is a clear need to adapt business support infrastructures and measures offered by regional or local authorities to the special needs of social enterprises (SE).

The DelFin project aims to promote social entrepreneurship in rural regions which face special transformation challenges related to advancing economic and social innovation.

In the last 3 years, eight project partners from Germany, Hungary, Croatia, and Italy have worked on improving the conditions and their support for social entrepreneurship in some of their countries' rural regions: Saalekreis District (DE), Hajdú-Bihar County (HU), Town of Duga Resa (HR) and rural areas in Piemonte Region (IT).

The project has facilitated cooperation of quadruple helix actors and developed a Toolbox for the promotion of social entrepreneurship in rural regions. This approach was tested in four pilot actions. In addition, eight Capacity Building seminars with a focus on municipalities and financial institutions have been organised to further spread the knowledge.

Moreover, the participating regions have each developed a three-year Regional Action Plan (RAP) to ensure sustainability and mainstreaming of project results. In addition, this Joint Transnational Strategy is also available for imitators as a common guiding framework to further improve the European landscape of support structures and the financial ecosystem surrounding social enterprises.

DelFin partners

Name of the organisation	Role in DelFin
Development Bank of Saxony-Anhalt (DE) ¹	Lead partner
Merseburg Innovation and Technology Center (DE) ²	Partner
Finpiemonte (IT) ³	Partner
Giacomo Brodolini Foundation (IT) ⁴	Partner
Hajdú-Bihar County Government (HU) ⁵	Partner
IFKA Public Benefit Non-Profit Ltd. for the Development of the Industry (HU) ⁶	Partner
Town of Duga Resa (HR) ⁷	Partner
Brodoto (HR) ⁸	Partner

¹ Development Bank of Saxony-Anhalt/Investitionsbank Sachsen-Anhalt: <https://www.ib-sachsen-anhalt.de/en/>

² Merseburger Innovation and Technology Centre: <https://www.mitz-merseburg.de/en/>

³ Finpiemonte: <https://www.finpiemonte.it/>

⁴ Giacomo Brodolino Foundation: <https://www.fondazionebrodolini.it/en>

⁵ Hajdú-Bihar County Government: https://www.hbmo.hu/LPage.aspx?key=490&PI_id=32

⁶ IFKA Public Benefit Non-Profit Ltd. for the Development of the Industry: <https://ifka.hu/>

⁷ Town of Duga Resa: <https://dugaresa.hr/>

⁸ Brodoto: <https://www.brodoto.com/>

Definition of Social Enterprises

Social enterprises combine societal goals with an entrepreneurial spirit. These organisations focus on achieving wider social, environmental or community objectives. The European Commission aims to create a favorable financial, administrative and legal environment for these enterprises so that they can operate on an equal footing with other types of enterprises in the same sector. The Social Business Initiative, launched in 2011 identified actions to make a real difference and improve the situation on the ground for social enterprises.⁹

What are Social Enterprises?

A social enterprise is an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involves employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities.

The European Commission uses the term “social enterprise” to cover the following types of business

- Those for who the social or societal objective of the common good is the reason for the commercial activity, often in the form of a high level of social innovation
- Those whose profits are mainly reinvested to achieve this social objective
- Those where the method of organisation or the ownership system reflects the enterprises’ mission, using democratic or participatory principles or focusing on social justice

There is no single legal form for social enterprises. Many social enterprises operate in the form of social cooperatives¹⁰ some are registered as private companies limited by guarantee, some are mutual, and a lot of them are non-profit-distributing organisations like provident societies, associations, voluntary organisations, charities or foundations.

Despite their diversity, social enterprises mainly operate in the following four fields

- Work integration – training and integration of people with disabilities and unemployed people
- Personal social services – health, well-being and medical care, professional training, education, health services, childcare services, services for elderly people, or aid for disadvantaged people
- Local development of areas – social enterprises in remote rural areas, neighborhood development/ rehabilitation schemes in urban areas, development aid and development cooperation with third countries
- Other – including recycling, environmental protection, sports, arts, culture or historical preservation, science, research and innovation, consumer protection and amateur sports.

¹ European Commission: Social enterprises: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/social-enterprises_en

² European Commission: Cooperatives: https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/cooperatives_en

Aim of the Transnational Strategy

This Transnational Strategy should be understood by its readers in two ways.

The project consortium achieved the definition of a common vision with objectives and priorities through a common strategic approach (i.e. Analysis of results, Toolbox development, Pilots carried out in all project regions, Capacity Buildings and close cooperation with relevant stakeholders).

Furthermore, during the implementation of these very concrete objectives, the DelFin project partners discovered that the learnings gained would be of value to a wider circle. Therefore, the partners agreed to continue in two directions. On the one hand, the aim was to pave the way for the development of the four Regional Action Plans (RAPs), which will contribute to the regionally-tailored improvement of funding and financing and support instruments for the promotion of social enterprises with a focus on the further development of business support. On the other hand, the lessons learned and steps taken are recorded in order to keep them available for imitators as advanced starting point.

Hence, this document, DelFin's "TRANSNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR PROMOTION OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN RURAL REGIONS":

- includes the description of DelFin's vision, methodology, self-tested steps and gives insights on how DelFin project promoted social entrepreneurship in rural remote regions (see chapter 2)
- concludes with honestly naming experienced challenges and providing recommendations (see chapter 2)
- encourages to self-define visions, set objectives and priorities involving relevant stakeholders from different policy levels (see chapter 3).

We, the DelFin consortium wish this Transnational Strategy to be used as common guiding framework to further improve the financial ecosystem, the growth and development of social entrepreneurship in Europe.

2. DELFIN'S METHODOLOGY

Vision

DelFins vision is to further develop financial ecosystems for the promotion of social entrepreneurship in rural regions.

In order to achieve this, the DelFin partners agreed on objectives and steps for implementation. These are outlined below and were the precursor work for a coherent strategic approach developed by the partners involved in the DelFin project and relevant to the whole Interreg programme area and beyond, recognising the special needs of social entrepreneurs in rural areas. It also reflects the European Commission's Action Plan on the Social Economy published in December 2021¹¹ (for more details see chapter 5), which is operationalised with the Regional Action Plans of DelFin's participating regions.

Finally, the actual Transnational Strategy, which concludes the project work and summarises conclusions and recommendation (see chapter 4), can be understood as the essence of the DelFin methodology and is intended to be imitated.

Objective 1: Analysis of the current situation in DelFin's partner regions

In order to better understand the current situation of social entrepreneurship in the "DelFin rural regions", first, each project partner conducted a separate Analysis describing the regional/local societal challenges (i.e. demographic facts, economic situation) and the potential contribution of social entrepreneurship. In addition, the Analysis looked at the current situation of social entrepreneurs, their special needs and challenges. It showed how the ecosystem could be improved in the fields of business support structures, access to finance and capacities needed in public administration and finance sector. These Analyses were combined into a joint comparative Analysis, which was used as a basis for developing the Toolbox; it showed several gaps where funding and financing of SE and business support structures need improvement.

Concrete steps to the Joint Analysis

- May 2019: all partners met in Saxony-Anhalt to define content and common structure for the Analysis of the regional ecosystems, the existing tools for promoting social entrepreneurship and the special needs of social businesses.
- July 2019: Partners organised regional stakeholder meetings with stakeholders from public administration, service provider for social enterprises, financial institutions and academia to discuss current situation of social entrepreneurship as input for Analysis.
- September 2019: Partners met in Italy to discuss the results of Analysis. A peer review with selected stakeholders from all regions was organised.
- September 2019: All partnertandems completed a regional Analysis of social enterprises in their

¹¹ <https://www.socialeconomy.eu.org/european-action-plan-for-the-social-economy/>

regions and contributed to the joint report. This drafted joint Analysis report was discussed at the Peer Review Meeting in Italy and finalised shortly after.

Findings

Regional facts and economic situation

In terms of economic and demographic conditions, there are both similarities and differences among the partner regions.

In all regions, the population is aging and in several regions, it is declining. A special situation exists in Piemonte (IT): The inner areas of Piemonte are significantly distant from the centres offering limited essential services and suffering from demographic decline, but rich in important environmental and cultural resources.

The economic situation is good in all regions, but Karlovac County (HR) has a high unemployment rate.

Situation of social entrepreneurship

In Germany (Saalekreis District), is no common definition for social entrepreneurs. The definition used for the Analysis is largely based on the version agreed with the Delfin partner consortium: Enterprises should generate income and follow a social goal. Social cooperatives that are part of a big organisation that offers social, health and educational services are not included.

In Italy (Piemonte) there are 19 registers and lists at national, regional and provincial level where the non-profit organisations (NPOs) can be registered to obtain legal recognition and tax benefits. These enterprises include social cooperatives that manage services to the individual: social care and socio-educational services and cooperatives that carry out productive activities aimed at providing employment for disadvantaged people.

November 2021, the Single National Third Sector Register (Runts) was established to overcome the current system of registration of third sector entities. But it is not yet fully implemented, there is still a lot of information and clarity to be done.

Definition of Hungarian Hajdú-Bihar County: Social enterprise is a consciously designed entrepreneurial activity that aims to solve social problems in an innovative way. Besides, the partner IFKA did several reflections in defining social enterprises.

In Croatia the government adopted the Strategy for the Development of Social Entrepreneurship in the Republic of Croatia for the period from 2015 to 2020. The Strategy defines social enterprises as “a business based on the principles of social, environmental and economic sustainability, in which generated profit is entirely or largely reinvested for the benefit of the community.”

Due to these different definitions, the number of social entrepreneurs reported also varies greatly – between only a few social entrepreneurs in Saalekreis District (DE) and Karlovac County (HU) and more than 800 in Piemonte (IT).

Business Support structures

All of the four regions have some business support structures. In the Saalekreis District (DE) and Piemonte (IT), the structures are focused on the regional context and are more clearly defined. There are several institutions operating.

In Karlovac and Hajdú-Bihar (HU) the support is more national. Regarding financing, crowdfunding

gained importance. Particularly EU and national programmes are relevant in Hajdú-Bihar (HU). In addition, social enterprise development organisations of international and domestic origin and corporate social responsibility programmes operating in the region.

Priorities

The following priorities were discovered for further development in the Delfin regions.

Saalekreis District (DE) needs individual support with respect to the special needs of social entrepreneurs, strengthening information and capacity building for new social entrepreneurs.

Piemonte (IT) needs to provide adequate economic and financial support and to exploit potential synergies with the local economic activities.

Karlovac County (HR) aims to eliminate lack of business skills among social entrepreneurs and to enable larger volumes of funding.

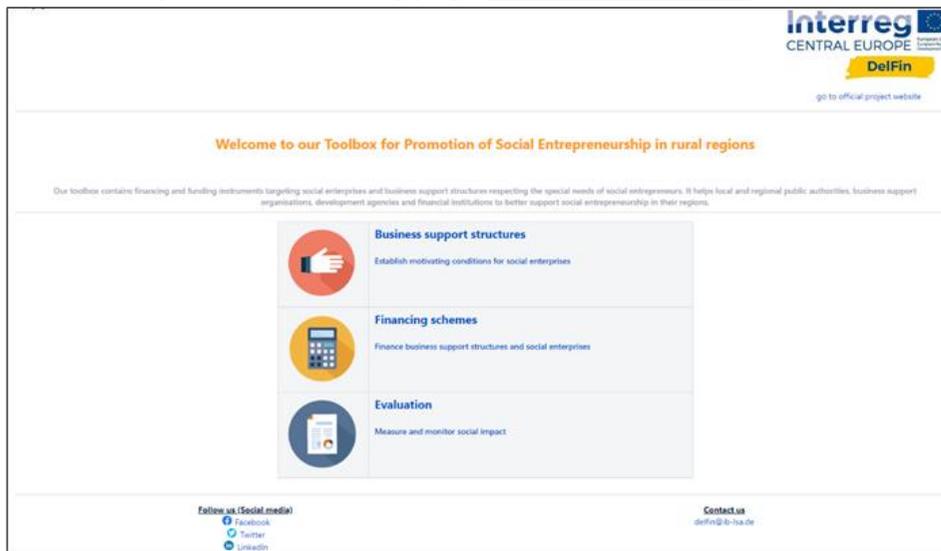
Hajdú-Bihar County (HU) has to focus on strengthening the familiarity of social businesses and on providing organisations with practical training.

Objective 2: Toolbox development

From the beginning the Toolbox for promotion of social entrepreneurship in rural regions is the core output of the project. Based on the Joint Analysis and identified good practices, partners developed the Toolbox (in the form of an online-compendium) for the promotion of social entrepreneurship. The Toolbox consists of existing tools and support instruments for social entrepreneurs within the DelFin partner regions and newly developed combined tools to address especially rural and remote territories. The Toolbox is as a source of inspiration intended for local and regional public authorities, business support organisations, development agencies and financial institutions.

Regional stakeholders were involved in developing the Analysis and Toolbox from the very beginning. They provided input for the Analysis and contributed to the development of the tools for promoting social entrepreneurship by participating in Regional Stakeholder Meetings, a Transnational Peer Review, a Transnational Transfer Workshop in each region and individual consultations.

Screenshot of Toolbox - Landing page www.support4SE.eu with three main topics



Concrete steps to the Toolbox

- September 2019: Partners met in Italy to discuss the results of Analysis. A peer review with selected stakeholders from all regions was organised, to identify good practices for tool finding.
- December 2019: Based on the Analysis, the collection of good practices and the Transnational Peer Review Meeting in Italy, German tandem partners intensified the transnational learning process with Transnational Transfer Workshops in all partner regions. Thereby partners and stakeholders discussed aspects of usability, transferability and adaptability of the presented good practices in respect of the special needs of social entrepreneurs and requirements of rural areas. Thus, they increased their knowledge.
- January 2020: All partners organised regional stakeholder meetings with stakeholders from public administration, service providers for social enterprises, financial institutions and academia to further discuss tool development of tools for promotion of social entrepreneurship.
- March 2020: Tool descriptions were completed and compiled into a Toolbox. Lead partner Development Bank of Saxony-Anhalt (DE) created an online Toolbox using a wiki software.

Priorities

Based on the analysis phase in which common challenges and good practices in the four rural partner regions were identified, the DelFin project developed Toolbox for promotion of social enterprises in rural regions was meant to be an online compendium and online available beyond active project lifetime on www.support4SE.eu.

Main users of the Toolbox are expected to be local and regional public authorities, business support organisations, development agencies and financial institutions.

The Toolbox focusses on business support structures (e.g. acceleration/incubators, training/coaching) and financing/funding of social enterprises and entrepreneurs (grants, loans and hybrid instruments) as well as tools on impact measurement, monitoring and scouting/market analysis.

The tools are described in detail with regard to the phase in which social enterprises are supported (from non-enterprise entities to social enterprises in a growth stage), to expected outcomes, steps for implementation, financial and human resources needed for the implementation as well as key success factors. Particular emphasis was placed on aspects such as usability, adaptability, and transferability to social enterprises and to rural areas. Overall, the Toolbox aims to strengthen the awareness of the important role of social entrepreneurship in rural regions with special transformation challenges and to advance economic and social innovation.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the project results, the DelFin project had shared activities with other Interreg CE projects including CE RESPONSIBLE, CERUSI, IN SITU, SIV, RESILIENT and Finance4SocialChange. DelFin partners took part in conferences, workshops and roundtables. Possibilities for providing and updating the DelFin Toolbox beyond the end of the project will be explored. At the time of writing this strategy, there is internal coordination on how to sustain the Toolbox in the most appropriate way.

Findings

The intensified transnational exchange of experiences (for example, through Transnational Workshops involving also regional stakeholders) enabled a bottom-up mutual learning process in the field of social entrepreneurship and tool development and thus access to a network of social economy ecosystems of similar rural areas across Europe.

Objective 3: Pilot Projects

DelFin project partners implemented four Pilot Projects to test social enterprise promotion tools: in Saalekreis District (DE), Hajdú-Bihar County (HU), Karlovac County (HR) and Piemonte Region (IT).

Concrete steps to the Pilots

Each pilot project was planned according to the before jointly agreed Concept. Adapting this to local realities, partner tandems implemented their pilots between June 2020 (first Kick-off Workshops) and June 2021 (Final Pilot Implementation Reports).

Apart from the individual features of the regional Pilots defined by the needs of the target groups and the local circumstances, each Pilot Project had to follow the same process and structure according to common milestones:

- Kick-off Workshops
- Mid-term Workshops
- Final Workshops
- Pilot visits
- Transnational Market Place
- Reflection on the experiences within the project consortium
- Final Implementation Report.

Each Pilot had to include and achieve these milestones according to the Joint Concept in order to ensure the harmonised implementation and standardised monitoring of the progress.

Based on the adaptation of the Joint Concept, the Italian tandem implemented the regional Pilot project between July 2020 and April 2021. Within the frameworks of the Pilot the Italian partners implemented three pilot workshops (Kick-off, Mid-term and Project Closing), and organised one Pilot visit. Six tools have been tested during the Pilot, which supported social enterprises in Piemonte Region.

Within the frameworks of the Pilot the Hungarian partners implemented three Pilot workshops (Kick-off, Mid-term and Project closing) and one pilot visit between September 2020 and April 2021. Two tools have been tested during the Pilot which supported and transferred to some social enterprises in Hajdú-Bihar County.

Croatian tandem implemented the regional Pilot project between July 2020 and March 2021. Within the frameworks of the Pilot the Croatian partners implemented three Pilot workshops (Kick-off, Mid-term and Project closing), one Pilot visit. Three tools have been tested during the Pilot which supported social enterprises in Duga Resa and Karlovac County.

The German tandem implemented the regional Pilot project between July 2020 and March 2021, Within the frameworks of the Pilot the German partners implemented three Pilot workshops (Kick-off, Mid-term and Final Pilot workshop) and organised one Pilot visit as well as one Network Meeting. Two tools as well as various existing funding instruments offered by Development Bank of Saxony-Anhalt for support of social enterprises have been integrated and tested.

In all partner countries, the pilots included both the already existing social enterprises and those that

are only in the initial, pre-registration phase but intend to become a social enterprise.

Priorities

Main goal of the Pilots was to test the support tools assembled in the Delfin Toolbox in an earlier stage of the project.

The Pilot projects had to apply the “ecosystem approach” and focus on the development of the social enterprise ecosystem as a whole, not simply on the social enterprises. Accordingly, the Pilots had to address diverse groups of stakeholders from the regional social enterprise ecosystems and involve them in the development services provided by the Pilots to the target group. In this way the relevant stakeholders could gain direct experiences on the application of the business and financial support tools tested through the pilots

Through the Pilots the partner tandems tested 17 of the tools. These tools represented a great variety of business support structures, financing and funding measures and initiatives as well as evaluation tools.

Findings

Our analysis shows that business support structures were dominant tools used, ahead of financing schemes or evaluation tools. The explanation for this is the majority of target groups involved in Pilot implementation were social enterprises in their very early stage of development.

The partners implemented a wide range of activities and interventions for testing tools from the Toolbox within the frameworks of the regional Pilot projects. These activities included Pilot workshops (Kick-off, Mid-term, and Final workshops), pilot visits organised and visited by the partners and training sessions, workshops, meetups and mentoring services for entrepreneurial/business skill and financial skill development.

As to outputs, each Pilot had to report on the achievement of both pre-defined and self-defined outputs. The pre-defined output indicators had been set in the Joint Concept. Here the partnership performed well, as in case of the majority the preliminary plans were achieved or even over-performed. 165 target group members were addressed by the partners, 43 of them had been involved in the pilots and 11 target group members started new social businesses¹² as the result of the Pilots. Partners organised four Pilot visits and 12 Pilot workshops (Kick-off, Mid-term and Final) during the implementation period of the Pilots.

The Pilot projects together involved more than 76 stakeholders (accelerators, higher education and research institutions, business support organisations, small and medium sized enterprises, social enterprises, regional and local public authorities, financial institutions and other organisations).

Pilot-related challenges

The experiences shared within the Delfin partners have shown a lot of challenges still to overcome in rural areas as analysed in the Pilot projects report discussed at the Transnational Working Group Meeting on the 20th of April 2021. Partners attending the meeting drafted a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) of the Pilots.

¹ Totally new social businesses (start-ups); existing business developed by adapting social business models and principles and existing social businesses developed and introduced new products/services.

According to its outcomes the following main types of obstacles and problems had been identified by the partners:

- **Target group engagement:** Each partner reported challenges regarding involving, engaging and keeping target group members active throughout the nine months of pilot project implementation.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Similarly finding the right stakeholders, involving and engaging them and maintaining their interest and activity throughout the pilots was challenging for most of the partners.
- **Transferability of tools:** majority of the tandems reported that it was challenging to transfer and adopt tools being effective in other regions among local circumstances. The original economic, political, legislative and societal conditions determine the transferability in advance, therefore it is crucial to be aware of these circumstances and take them into consideration when adopting tools from other regions or even countries.
- **Adequacy of tools:** several partners reported that the tools being effective in case of their original target groups were just not fully adequate for the actual target groups of their specific Pilots. For example, fixed term programmes were not adequate for social enterprises being in different stages of their life cycles. Neither financial support nor financial tools were adequate for target group members being in the first phase of their development (pre-funders and start-ups). Under the category "Adequacy" we can mention that the incentives provided within the frameworks of the Pilots were less adequate and motivating for the target groups (financial incentives like awards and grants were missing, certificates were not considered as incentives by the target group members).
- **Cultural/entrepreneurial mindset:** Some partners reported the dominance of non-profit culture and the lack of entrepreneurial mindset in case of target group members (e.g. low awareness on economic and financial sustainability of social enterprises), that hindered the testing of certain tools and the implementation of the pilots.

Some solutions

To solve the above listed challenges the following solutions had been developed and tested by the partners:

- **Increasing target group engagement:** To increase target group engagement and activity in the Pilots, partners implemented additional needs analysis activities in different phases of the Pilot projects. Based on the outcomes of the needs assessment they intended to adapt the tools to the detected needs of the target groups, for example they developed incentives (skills development, networking as rewards for active participation) or split long-term pilot processes into 2-3 phases according to the different development stages of target group members. Flexibility had been generally required to attract and sustain the interest of the target group. Exploiting existing networks for informing, attracting and engaging target group members also had been applied generally. Several partners mentioned that involvement of additional human resources was crucial to be able to apply the solutions developed for increasing target group engagement.
- **Increasing stakeholder engagement:** Partners emphasised the importance of intensive and regular communication of Pilot goals and achievements as an essential method for increasing stakeholder interest and engagement. Several partners provided meaningful tasks (e.g. holding lectures, playing an active role in pitching events as jury members etc.) to attract and engage stakeholders. More general solutions like exploiting existing networks and flexibility to meet stakeholder needs and

expectations had also been listed as methods for increasing stakeholder activity and engagement. Finally, just like in case of target groups, involvement of additional human resources was inevitable to be able to apply the solutions developed for involving and engaging more stakeholders.

- Increasing transferability of tools: Analysis of the given policy and legislative preconditions in case of the tools to be adapted as well as in case of the target region was mentioned as crucial premise of increasing the transferability of tools. Another effective solution was to select such tools which already have a history or at least antecedents in the respective region and can be built on existing schemes.
- Development of adequacy of tools: Several partners reported that in-depth analysis of target group needs was inevitable to find tools which are adequate for them. Adaption of the tools was also needed (e.g. modification of original indicators and applying new ones being more adequate to the development stage of the target group) to make them more adequate for the targeted social enterprises. Either the screening of the needs or the adaption of the tools selected for testing required investment in additional human resources (e.g. providing one-on-one consultations, more frequent small-group trainings and mentoring). Some partners reported that extending the circle of stakeholders (e.g. involvement of investors and public authorities beside financial institutions) could also raise the adequacy of the tools.
- Changing cultural/entrepreneurial mindset: Investment in additional human resources was inevitable to put the priority on this topic and provide the necessary attitude formation (e.g. mentoring).

Added value for participating entrepreneurs and stakeholders

Despite the pandemic and its consequences (unexpected events during implementation, insecurities and uncertainties in the processes) and other experienced challenges (see above), the DelFin project had a very positive effect on the participating entrepreneurs from the selected rural regions, especially regarding their social impacts and role in rural development and social innovation.

Beyond the personal successes of the participants, the local stakeholder networks and social enterprise ecosystems also benefitted from the project, partners joined existing networks, created new ones, established new relationships and cooperation opportunities. Participants as well as stakeholders found new frames for their joint future. They felt themselves to be pioneers of social entrepreneurship in their regions, where the sector was not well known before in the majority of the cases, but became visible as a result of the project.

Objective 4: Capacity Buildings

From the DelFin perspective, Capacity Building increases knowledge and understanding on how social economy is, how it works and how it can be efficiently promoted and supported by the ecosystem, in order to disseminate to a broader audience knowledge and experiences generated in the earlier phases of the project i.e Analysis and Tool Development and Pilot Implementation.

Concrete steps to the Capacity Buildings

A coherent approach was developed, and then adapted to the regional realities. This Joint Concept took inspiration from the Lean Start-up Method, the process results as a continuum cycle between project level, transnational level, and local implementation, with a high level of flexibility and adaptation but at the same time some common point to compare the results.

Each country tandem held two capacity-building events, during September/October 2021.

Priorities

The seminars were targeted at

- a) local and regional authorities, development agencies and business support organisations (110 participants)
- b) financial institutions and regional authorities (80 participants)

Stakeholders of the local and regional ecosystem (social entrepreneurs, finance institutions, business support organisations, local and public authorities) were involved as speakers, panelists and participants.

From a structured analysis of need, the project-partners deduced that the main skills needed for target groups were:

- to create awareness and common understanding on social enterprises – what are their specific characteristics and needs
- to support social economy and inclusive growth – how to support enabling factors for strengthening the ecosystem
- to gather public and private funds available on the territories
- to share knowledge on new financial measures and adapt existing tools (from DelFin Toolbox)

Findings

These skills were used differently in the four regions.

Based on the local analysis of the target and the identification of the skills to be transmitted, each tandem established the most suitable methodology to deliver the Seminars. Methods used included: card game; focus group; frontal presentation/thematic session; group discussion; panel discussion; peer learning; Q&A session; storytelling/marketplace; working group; world café problem solving; Learning building site.

Target groups involved in the local seminars

Target group	DE	HU	HR	IT	Total
Local public authority	4	8	6	0	18
Interest groups including NGOs	2	0	3	13	18
Higher education and research	0	1	3	4	8
Education/training centre etc.	1	0	0	0	1
SME	4	6	4	3	17
Business support organisation	5	3	2	1	11
Regional public authority	2	3	1	1	7
Sectoral agency	0	2	4	1	7
Other	8	1	1	13	23

A challenge was to gain such key players and to keep them. The level of participation was slightly below the target, but the project-partners were satisfied with the results anyway.

According to two macro themes the following lessons learned were gained.

Evaluations of experience in terms of content, targets and skills

Increase of participation of public authorities is vital with the purpose to strengthening awareness on what social enterprises are and their specifics as well as developing capabilities to support their emergence and growth. The following should be taken into account:

- Small municipalities (with less than 5.000 inhabitants): Due to their small dimension, some local bodies have human resource constraints and lack of capabilities, which makes their direct involvement in capacity building activities difficult (transnational perspective: Merseburg Innovation and Technology Center, Town of Duga Resa, Giacomo Brodolini Foundation and Finpiemonte). Usually, in fact, small municipalities delegate their representation to intermediate bodies or to external parties to whom they entrust technical assistance.
- Local Action Groups (LAGs): are key stakeholders for implementing local development strategies by awarding grants to local projects in the frame of European Common Agricultural Policy and improving the sense of belonging of local communities with their territories. Increase LAGs participation in Capacity Building activities could make the difference in settle an ecosystem strategy for supporting social economy and enterprises (Italian perspective).

More SEs should be involved to liaise with authorities and financial institutions in the new programming period to raise awareness and share information. (IFKA perspective).

Evaluations on the instrument itself and how to reuse it

In general, it was noted that the following aspects contributed to have a successful event:

- Avoiding generalist events: organising “sectoral” training workshops and differentiating objectives has proven to be a successful approach.
- Avoiding the consolidation of many topics in one seminar
- A limited number of participants allows for hands-on sessions and extensive interaction, reinforcing learning experiences.

- Involving speakers/trainers with sound on-the-field experience could provide practical tools and methodologies to be shared and discussed, thus ensuring the practical effectiveness of the training.

In particular, it was emphasised that the following should be maintained:

- The chosen methodology with plenary session alternated working groups in separated rooms (joint partner perspective).
- The breakout rooms structure of online video conference systems enables various advantages:
 - it allows very interactive and productive discussion among participants (joint partner perspective).
 - most efficient to get people directly involved when working online (German perspective).
- A mix of stakeholders is better than dividing per “profile” to work with an ecosystem prospective (Brodoto perspective (CR)).
- Particularly worth highlighting are topics such as the creation of public-private partnerships and the topic of measuring social impact (Town of Duga Resa perspective (CR)).
- The selection of speakers/trainers from recognised sectoral institutions with high reputation and credibility increases the attractiveness of workshops and ensures participation (Finpiemonte perspective (IT)).

Almost all partners agreed that the timing of the events was good but the length of the seminar should be as short as possible and, if necessary, split into different sessions or days. Workshops should be no longer than half a day, as it is difficult to keep participants engaged (they do not have a day for additional activities) and to maintain their attention (especially if the workshops are held online).

An open discussion was held on the opportunity to anticipated part of Capacity Building activities at the beginning of the project, in order to better involve relevant local stakeholders throughout the entire process.

Objective 5: Action Plans

The Action Plans are the concrete outcome of DelFin project at regional level.

Concrete steps to the Regional Action Plans

Again based on a common structure, they apply the lessons learned to their plans for the next three-five years.

Obtaining feedback from experts with different background of experience and from different levels and thus, giving the possibility of cross-checking with activities foreseen in the RAPs.

Priorities

Business Support Structures: DelFin Action Plans aim to ensure that policy and legal frameworks are right for the local social economy to thrive, by addressing the diversity of their legal forms and improving at taxation policy, labels or certification systems and public procurement.

Accessible Financing instruments: DelFin Action Plans aim to improve access to funding for the social economy; they bring together in one place information on relevant local or national fundings, policies and initiatives, they support scaling-up and maximise the social economy's contribution digital transitions.

Awareness and capacity building: DelFin Action Plans aim to boost the visibility of the social economy and obtain new data about it. They consolidate the collaboration process among the players of the regional/local ecosystem that support social entrepreneurship to further exploit the hints provided by the DelFin Toolbox.

Findings

The Action Plans set out concrete actions to help social entrepreneurship to grow. They show that in order to support social entrepreneurship, partner regions should create the right policy and legal frameworks and conditions. DelFin stakeholders and experts draw attention to:

- the role of the Action Plan for the social economy in increasing the visibility and recognition of the sector as a whole and of its enterprises in particular. Better visibility, understanding and recognition of the benefits and obstacles for the social economy continue to be important. Raising awareness and improving communication on support opportunities for stakeholders have a big potential to boost the social economy. Young people, who may be the social entrepreneurs of the future, should be included in these efforts. Economic and business faculties of universities could be targeted with information about the social economy with a view to presenting it as a potential career path.
- the importance to improve access to funding; this is a key topic for supporting the social economy. It transpires from the feedback that many social economy stakeholders are unaware of the local and national funding opportunities available to them which addresses many of the reported needs. Improvements can be made to the information available on funding opportunities specific to the social economy, as well as on opportunities in other EU funding programmes.
- the benefits of supporting the social enterprises in their digitalisation efforts (especially because rural regions were involved in the project) to promote capacity building and mutual learning.

What's in the DelFin Action Plans?

In the next sections the four Plans are summarised. The full contents of the DelFin Partners' Regional Action Plans can be found in the annexes.

Action Plan: Saxony-Anhalt Region (DE)

Objectives

- (1) Strengthen the promotion of social entrepreneurship start-ups in Saxony-Anhalt through various actions to increase the start-up rate
- (2) Create visibility and awareness of social entrepreneurship through the expansion of the network.
- (3) Address barriers for social entrepreneurs through the implementation of targeted actions to contribute the long-term socio-economic development of Saxony-Anhalt and its communities.

Actions

Action 1: Ecosystem – The aim is to create an active ecosystem and network with all relevant players from business, science, civil society, and politics. This action is supported by the following activities:

- (1) Develop a social innovation strategy
- (2) Establishment of a central coordination office (e.g., scouting initiatives, establish and maintain an Advisory Board for Social Entrepreneurship, communication platform); This activity is supported by the interim establishment of a network office for Social Entrepreneurship in Saxony-Anhalt (SENSA)³
- (3) Involve universities for knowledge transfer to young generation of founders

Action 2: Business support – The aim is to develop business support structures for social enterprises through these activities:

- (1) Enrich classic start-up support (e.g., trainings for existing business support providers)
- (2) Consulting services for local initiatives

Action 3: Financing Instruments – The aim is to improve finance or funding instruments directly supporting social enterprises through these activities:

- (1) Within the preparation of the new EU-Funding period 2021-2027, the funding guidelines will be reviewed and adjusted. (Opening or supplementing existing offers)
- (2) Develop funding opportunities for competitions for social entrepreneurs.

Action 4: Transnational cooperation – The aim is to cooperate transnationally in the following ways:

- (1) Continue using and extending the "Toolbox for Promotion of Social Entrepreneurship in rural regions", (see www.support4SE.eu) to improve the support instruments for social entrepreneurship.

<https://www.sensa-netzwerk.de/>

Action Plan: Hajdú-Bihar County HU

Objectives

- (1) 10 % increase in the number of social enterprises with enhanced business and marketing skills by 2023 (baseline year: 2020)
- (2) Solid network of Hajdú-Bihar County social enterprises with at least 10 members

Actions

Action 1: Business support – Develop business support structures for social enterprises through these activities:

- (1) Making the Delfin Toolbox a "living instrument" in Hajdú-Bihar County
- (2) Promotion of the "social enterprise development" course of the University of Debrecen

Action 2: Funding Instruments – Improve finance or funding instruments directly supporting social enterprises through these activities:

- (1) Promotion of UniCredit Social Banking Programme in Hajdú-Bihar County
- (2) Promotion of Priority 3 of Regional Development Strategic Plan of Hajdú-Bihar County 2021-2027 with special regard to measures supporting the ecosystem for SEs

Action 3: Transnational Cooperation – Cooperate transnationally in the following ways

- (1) Supporting adoption process of further tools from the Toolbox in other countries (e.g. NEMO methodology in Hajdú-Bihar County)
- (2) Development of joint projects within the frameworks of transnational EU programs (e.g. Interreg Europe, Central Europe, Danube, Interreg CBC programs, Horizon Europe etc.)
- (3) Joint mapping and exploiting social entrepreneurship and social innovation development opportunities (e.g. training programs)
- (4) Mapping and exploiting transnational marketing opportunities for social enterprises (fairs, online marketplaces etc.)
- (5) Maintenance and extension of the Delfin Toolbox
- (6) Capitalisation of Delfin achievements (e.g. integration into the services of Social Innovation Competence Centres)

Action Plan: Town of Duga Resa and Karlovac County (HR)

Objectives

- (1) Improved access to the labour market for unemployed and inactive people, especially young people, women, and vulnerable groups by developing and improving existing forms of business for 10 social entrepreneurs and/or start-ups with social innovation and impact in Duga Resa and Karlovac County by 2024.
- (2) At least 20 different actors, including public authorities, private sector and business support structures participating in social entrepreneurship outreach.

Actions

Action 1: Business support

- (1) Encourage creation and development of the social entrepreneurship through business incubator and coworking space (The incubation programme for social entrepreneurs was implemented within the pilot phase of the DelFin project. The programme will continue as a regular activity through the incubator and coworking supports in Duga Resa)

Action 2: Funding instruments

- (2) Activity 2.1 Launch of the open call/programme of the City of Duga Resa for financing social entrepreneurial projects with emphasis on local needs
- (3) Activity 2.2. Promotion of Operational Programme Effective Human Resources 2021-2027 (OPULJP 2021-2027)/ESF+ and LAG Vallis Colapis. LAG Petrova Gora and LAG Frankopan open calls for investments in social enterprises (Rural Development Program).

Action 3: Transnational cooperation

- (1) Present the key project outputs/deliverables at the final dissemination event of the Interreg Central Europe, CE RESPONSIBLE project (LP: E-Institute/Institute for Comprehensive Development Solutions; Ptuj, Slovenia), taking place in mid-March 2022.
- (2) Present the Toolbox and other relevant project results during project implementation of the Erasmus+ Adult Education stream project that PP6 Brodoto will be implementing with Social Business Hub Styria (Austria) if the Project will be awarded with funding during the course of 2022. The project aims at supporting social entrepreneurs in Styria and Croatia.
- (3) Present the Toolbox to the Croatian working group of social and ecological impact BSOs working on Croatia's accession to the Global Steering Group for Social Investment. Some of the working group members are partners in other Interreg projects, such as Finance4SocialChange, a project giving support to economy that inspires positive social change in the Danube Region.

Action Plan: Piemonte (IT)

Objectives

- (1) Consolidate the collaboration process among the players of the regional/local ecosystem that support social entrepreneurship and further exploit the hints provided by the DelFin Toolbox.
- (2) For this reason and with the purpose of further supporting the development of social entrepreneurship in Piemonte rural areas, also with the application of the DelFin Toolbox, our goal will be play an active role in stimulating a better coordination among the actors of the ecosystem.

Actions

Action 1: Promote the networking and coordination among the relevant players of the ecosystem, for the development of new/improved support measures for social entrepreneurship and related funding instruments.

- (1) Within the regional ecosystem, Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intend to play an active role in stimulating networking and coordination among different public/private players, in order to favour the co-programming of new support measures and new funding instruments addressed to the birth and growth of social enterprises in rural/mountain areas. In this framework, the Toolbox developed in DelFin will be a working tool and it may find further application.

Action 2: Transnational cooperation

- (1) Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intend to search for new opportunities for transnational cooperation for the set-up of new EU/interreg projects related to rural/mountain areas and impact-oriented enterprises
- (2) Thanks to its participation to the SEED project (Social Innovation Ecosystem Development), financed by the ESF under the EC EASI programme, as well as thanks to the ESF Transnational Cooperation Platform Community of Practice on Social Innovation, Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intends to further disseminate the DelFin results, the Toolbox and the policy recommendation.
- (3) If the project submitted by Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini in partnership with IFKA (HU) under the call for proposal Horizon Governance (currently under evaluation) will be funded, this will offer other relevant dissemination opportunities at international level for the DelFin results and the Toolbox.
- (4) Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini believe that the experience of the “Social Business Pitching Forum” (developed in the transnational marketplace of DelFin within the Impact Conference 2021), should somehow be maintained by the partnership. It should be relaunched every year in the framework of the Impact Conference, and be extended to new territories, since it is important to give local businesses from rural/mountain areas an international showcase in which to feel valued. Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini will propose to DelFin consortium to work further in this direction and will remain available to collaborate

3. THE EXPERTS' VIEWS

Our original plan was to hold a live “Policy Advisory Group” meeting in the autumn in Brussels. The aim of this was to place the draft results in the context of EU policies (especially the EU Social Entrepreneurship Initiative). We planned to do this in discussion with representatives from the Commission Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES), EU institutions and networks and other regions. In this way we planned to ensure the sustainability and transferability of the project results.

But, once again, we had to react creatively to the pandemic circumstances to keep the envisioned expert involvement as an asset, even if we could not organise a face-to-face event.

Instead, we requested experts from different levels to participate remotely. Six kindly agreed to provide feedback in this way. They were given a concise insight into the DelFin project, the main outcomes and how we prepared the Regional Action Plans. They were asked to answer a short list of questions that had been prepared beforehand. In this way they gave us among other things their suggestions on how social entrepreneurship could be fostered in remote rural areas and hints on what transnational activity they would propose.

This shows that in the course of DelFin’s project implementation in the respective regions, depending on the starting point of the regions involved at the beginning of the project, we have either gained a clear picture of the challenges and needs or received confirmation of previous findings and direction of next steps.

These expert feedbacks have been shared within the project consortium. Hence, all partners will be familiar with expert feedback and they can incorporate it into their future social entrepreneurship work beyond the end of the DelFin project.

The expert’s feedbacks are incorporated into this Joint Transnational Strategy, too. This will ensure that the experts’ feedback can be available as future recommendations to a wider audience. The experts and their feedbacks are briefly presented below.

DelFin Transnational Strategy: Experts' contributions



Erdmuthe Klaer,
Deputy Secretary General,
European Network of Cities and Regions
for the Social Economy (REVES aisbl)

DelFin: What is your expertise (or background) that relates to DelFin? Social enterprises? The region or country involved in the project? Public policy? Please provide just a few words

Erdmuthe Klaer: Since more than 15 years and together with my colleagues I accompany cities/regions, on one hand, and local/regional social economy organisations, on the other, in their exploration of different forms of cooperation aiming to strengthen the social economy specifically and a fairer, more participative and sustainable local development more in general. Moreover, I'm involved in different social economy initiatives also at private level.

DelFin: Thinking about the sector, how can it be supported by public authorities? Is it simple or complicated?

Erdmuthe Klaer: From our experience regarding partnerships between public authorities and the social economy it appears highly recommendable for public authorities and governments wishing to develop specific strategies, programmes and policies to involve social economy (and possibly also other stakeholders) right from the start in the development of the former.

What appears also crucial in this context is the creation of mutual awareness/understanding and trust: Policy-makers, administration (this is particularly important), social economy organisations and other players finding themselves around a table (or not) should know and understand who their interlocutors are, what the latter's role is, their potential, difficulties, from which perspective the other persons speak. Such processes might initially take time, but save a lot of efforts and time afterwards that might otherwise need to be invested to solve misunderstandings, review initiatives remaining without impact or remedy costly duplications (e.g. policies and programmes running in parallel without any coordination between each other).

Important also: public authorities should not try to simply add social economy as a beneficiary to existing measures and support schemes for enterprises in general (e.g. just opening normal business advice to social economy), but should rather adapt services to better respond to the specificities of the social economy (this might also require training for service providers/civil servants, etc.). Much still remains to be done in this respect.

Support can then be multi-fold- reaching from appropriate advisory services for (future) and existing social economy initiatives over different type of financial support through specific programmes or financial instruments to the facilitation of access to European funds including cohesion policy- related finance (making social economy an element of operational programmes not only under ESF, but also other funds such as the ERDF) or the provision – at no costs or reduced rents – of land, buildings or offices, to name just a few elements.

DelFin: To foster social enterprises in remote rural areas, what first step would you recommend?

Erdmuthe Klaer:

- Mapping of existing social economy/community initiatives.
- Bringing them all around a table – together with citizens and other local stakeholders - to get to know each other, clarify potential, needs (also of the local community in general) and possibilities for cooperation.

DelFin: What “transnational action” would you suggest?

Erdmuthe Klaer:

- Mentoring schemes (twinning) - also for public authorities - that go beyond a mere exchange of practices and allow regions/areas with stronger experience regarding social economy-related policies and initiatives to share their know-how with less experienced colleagues.
- Education-related initiatives: We need more tools allowing for social economy to become a topic already in school education, but also in secondary and higher education, technical schools, etc.
- Exchange on the use of European programmes, instruments and funds for the promotion of the social economy at regional/local level: Examples are the use of instruments such as InvestEU, but also cohesion policy funds and related operational programmes (going “beyond ESF+”), etc.

DelFin: Thank you for your kind contribution.

DelFin Transnational Strategy: Experts' contributions



Norbert Kunz,
CEO Social Impact gmbH, Germany

DelFin: What is your expertise (or background) that relates to DelFin? Social enterprises? The region or country involved in the project? Public policy? Please provide just a few words.

Norbert Kunz: I am a social entrepreneur myself, setup Social Impact Labs, mentored and supported over 1000 social entrepreneurs and participated in projects in the field of social entrepreneurship (e.g. Social(i)Makers).

DelFin: Did you have a role in DelFin already? What was it?

Norbert Kunz: Participation in various events within the framework of DelFin, including presentations at the Pilot, as well as participation as an expert.

DelFin: In your view, what is special about the “social enterprise sector”?

Norbert Kunz: Social entrepreneurs are impact-oriented, collaborative and non-competitive. They primarily try to create something sustainable with their work. Social entrepreneurs don't ask themselves “What is economic activity?” but “What is good economic activity?”

DelFin: ... and what is special about social enterprises in remote rural areas?

Norbert Kunz: The funding situation for social entrepreneurs in rural areas is more difficult than in urban areas. They mainly operate on a regional basis.

Social entrepreneurs in urban areas, on the other hand, often think nationally or beyond. The aim is to create a supply contribution for the region and social entrepreneurs are thus closer to the needs of the region, but they also have to provide a more differentiated range of services, since the market is usually lacking.

Social entrepreneurs in rural areas go there because they want to live there. Many have the idea of the new living space first, not entrepreneurship. Starting a business in a rural area is based on other factors (do I feel comfortable there), but infrastructural personal everyday conditions are also decisive (e.g. transport routes, schools/nurseries, are there other social entrepreneurs in the region).

DelFin: Thinking about the sector, how can it be supported by public authorities? Is it simple or complicated?

Norbert Kunz: Know-how is needed among the advisory bodies. It must be understood what social entrepreneurs are, what they need and what the differences are to regular entrepreneurs.

The importance of social entrepreneurs, especially in rural areas, must be seen.

The qualification of business developers and consultants on the special needs of social entrepreneurs is an important factor. Furthermore, the adjustment of framework conditions is necessary, as the system is too restrictive and sluggish.

DelFin: To foster social enterprises in remote rural areas, what first step would you recommend?

Norbert Kunz: There must be a positive appreciation for social entrepreneurs. A new identity of the region must be created and this can be created by social entrepreneurs. Currently, public authorities do not value social entrepreneurs or do not take them seriously, which delays processes.

Public institutions must be sensitized for social entrepreneurship.

There is currently no way for public funding directly for social entrepreneurs or the possible programs take too long (Leader). You have to fight very hard to get a foothold as a social entrepreneur in rural areas and you have hardly any support.

On the one hand, there must be events to raise awareness for social entrepreneurship and its importance, especially in rural areas. Furthermore, the infrastructural conditions must also be in place for social entrepreneurs to enter these regions.

Trained consultants are needed to provide adequate advice and support. Currently, there is no accompanying offer in rural areas.

DelFin: What “transnational action” would you suggest?

Norbert Kunz: You can learn a lot from abroad, especially in the area of social finance. Germany is somewhat stuck in this area. There are no funding programs for social entrepreneurs at the state level. Portugal, for example, is working on a financing model in which the amount of funding is based on the benefit for the common good and the reduction of public costs.

Basically, one can say that one has to learn in the European context in order to optimize processes.

DelFin: Thank you for your kind contribution.

DelFin Transnational Strategy: Experts' contributions

Guy Lejeune,
Senior expert Entrepreneurship⁴

DelFin: What is your expertise (or background) that relates to DelFin? Social enterprises? The region or country involved in the project? Public policy? Please provide just a few words

Guy Lejeune: I have expertise in (social) entrepreneurship/social economy.

DelFin: In your view, what is special about the “social enterprise sector”?

Guy Lejeune: That social enterprises are not characterised by their similarity of activities, like usual sectors. They cover (very) different kinds of activities and are characterised by their common business model, which puts people and the planet before profit.

DelFin: ... and what is special about social enterprises in remote rural areas?

Guy Lejeune: They primarily aim to serve the community where they are based, retaining population, economic activities and revenues locally. They foster short value chains, facilitating local production and consumption, and also contribute to the provision of social services that are often limited in rural and more remote areas.

DelFin: Thinking about the sector, how can it be supported by public authorities? Is it simple or complicated?

Guy Lejeune: Because the sector is very transversal, and therefore lacks visibility, actions in many different fields are needed. The EU’s action plan for the social economy, launched in December 2021, therefore contains more than 60 actions.

DelFin: To foster social enterprises in remote rural areas, what first step would you recommend?

Guy Lejeune: Many European regional and local authorities have powers to develop strategies and instruments to support the development of local and regional social economy ecosystems. There is scope to better capitalise on this potential, also by better use of existing EU support. For example, the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development enables measures that can contribute to the development of social economy in rural areas, such as investment for farmers and in basic services, diversification and cooperation.

DelFin: What “transnational action” would you suggest?

Guy Lejeune: One idea is to follow up on the Commission’s call on Member States (in the EU’s action plan for the social economy) to set up local social economy contact points playing the role of social economy ambassadors, providing peer-to-peer support, facilitating access to EU and national funding, and liaising with authorities managing European funds. A additional transnational action could be to link these contact points and set up mutual learning exchanges between them.

DelFin: Thank you for your kind contribution.

³. The below comments reflect the views of Guy Lejeune, not necessarily those of the European Commission.

DelFin Transnational Strategy: Experts' contributions

David Lamb,
Team Leader,
European Network for Rural Development, ENRD

DelFin: What is your expertise (or background) that relates to DelFin? Social enterprises? The region or country involved in the project? Public policy? Please provide just a few words.

David Lamb: I work across the EU on Rural Development Policy. One of our main areas of work is social sustainability, and thus included input into the Long Term Vision for Rural Areas. We have produced a number of examples of social enterprises funded by European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development⁵.

We connect all the Rural Networks in each Member State of the EU working on these types of initiatives.

DelFin: In your view, what is special about the “social enterprise sector”?

David Lamb: The ability to connect public good with investment, and the recognition that economic benefit should not always outweigh social value.

DelFin: ... and what is special about social enterprises in remote rural areas?

David Lamb: They provide community benefit and connection, which helps to sustain vibrant rural areas.

DelFin: Thinking about the sector, how can it be supported by public authorities? Is it simple or complicated?

David Lamb: It can be complicated, but should be simplified and considered as a key for developing communities. Initiatives such as rural proofing can help to prioritise the sector, and to channel more investment across funding areas⁶.

DelFin: To foster social enterprises in remote rural areas, what first step would you recommend?

David Lamb: To consider development of joint action, even across Member States to share knowledge, develop peer-to-peer connections and best practice.

DelFin: What “transnational action” would you suggest?

David Lamb: Connecting development to the Long Term Vision for Rural Areas, and considering an international event, or even connecting to an existing one. LEADER has transnational cooperation funding, and this could and should be an excellent platform.

DelFin: Thank you for your kind contribution.

4. https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/social%2520enterprises_en

5. https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd-thematic-work/long-term-rural-vision/TG-rural-proofing_en_en

DelFin Transnational Strategy: Experts' contributions



Ivana Sesar,
Head of Unit for the set-up and implementation
of financial instruments in the Ministry of Labour,
Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Croatia

DelFin: What is your expertise (or background) that relates to DelFin? Social enterprises? The region or country involved in the project? Public policy? Please provide just a few words.

Ivana Sesar: My background includes participating in public policy processes connected to social entrepreneurship development. I was part of a team responsible for the Strategy for the development of social entrepreneurship in Croatia for the period 2015-2020 and now, we are in the process of programming and setting up financial instruments which will be financed from the European Social Fund Plus and tailored to social enterprises in Croatia.

DelFin: Did you have a role in DelFin already? What was it?

Ivana Sesar: Active participation (speaker) at capacity building seminars for municipalities and financial institutions organised in September 2021 (live) and October 2021 (online) by the Croatian tandem partner, Town of Duga Resa and Brodoto.

DelFin: In your view, what is special about the “social enterprise sector”?

Ivana Sesar: Social enterprise sector is special because it is doing something that many people believe is impossible - entities which are part of the social enterprise sector are entrepreneurial (which means they are making some kind of profit) and at the same time being responsible in their actions for nature and the community as a whole. They are living proof that making a profit does not automatically entail disregarding natural and human resources and that the balance between economic incentives and care for nature and the people (workers and the wider community) can be achieved.

DelFin: ... and what is special about social enterprises in remote rural areas?

Ivana Sesar: First of all, social enterprises in remote rural areas can be job creators, which means they are helping make those rural areas (more) populated and thriving. Also, they can help in the development of entrepreneurial activities in general, which also adds to the prosperity of the community. Considering their regard for natural resources, they can help in the development of healthy and balanced agriculture. All in all, they can help in the development of remote rural areas in a balanced, organic way, taking into account the cultural and natural specificities of the area.

DelFin: Thinking about the sector, how can it be supported by public authorities? Is it simple or complicated?

Ivana Sesar: The sector can and should be supported by public authorities. The complexity (or simplicity) of that help depends only on the complexity (or simplicity) of the public authorities' way of doing business, so to speak. The real complexity stems from the large number of interested stakeholders and making sure that all needs are taken into account. The public authority should try to do the minimum to help the social enterprise sector to develop, which means it should establish a basic and flexible regulatory framework to give the sector the relevance and recognisability it deserves.

DelFin: To foster social enterprises in remote rural areas, what first step would you recommend?

Ivana Sesar: The local authorities and other relevant stakeholders from the social enterprise sector should try to establish official working groups with the aim of devising specific actions for the development of social enterprises and then monitor and evaluate their implementation. Those working groups should be functional over longer periods of time and responsible for the development of the sector and all the documents which regulate the sector at the local level.

DelFin: What "transnational action" would you suggest?

Ivana Sesar: Study visits to other countries which are comparable to Croatia, but which have a more developed public policy for the social enterprise sector, especially at the local level. They could be a good source of knowledge, all the good practices, but also the bad ones, and maybe some of the good practices could be used as a starting point here in Croatia as well.

DelFin: Thank you for your kind contribution.

Delfin Transnational Strategy: Experts' contributions



**Beatrix Bedone Pal, Founder & CEO
Impact Hub Budapest, Hungary**

Delfin: What is your expertise (or background) that relates to Delfin? Social enterprises? The region or country involved in the project? Public policy? Please provide just a few words

Beatrix Bedone Pal: Keen on empowering and supporting positive social change as a social incubator company. We supported the social enterprises with trainings and mentoring in the Delfin program in North-Hungary.

Delfin: Did you have a role in Delfin already? What was it?

Beatrix Bedone Pal: Managing and implementing the workshops, mentoring and the Pitch Day.

Delfin: In your view, what is special about the “social enterprise sector”?

Beatrix Bedone Pal: The “social enterprise sector” includes enterprises and businesses that are changing the world for a better. Supporting and creating positive social change. This sector focuses on social problems and aim to make business solutions for them. This sector is the one which always gather communities around it. They have clear social and environmental mission. The sector profit is social profit. The sector measures their impact on the society in many ways.

Delfin: ... and what is special about social enterprises in remote rural areas?

Beatrix Bedone Pal: The “social enterprise sector” is even more challenging in remote rural areas than in cities. In general, there are less stakeholders and capacities to work with or use. The social enterprises in rural areas work in smaller markets, smaller communities, on the other hand the social problems are more visible and bigger problem.

Delfin: Thinking about the sector, how can it be supported by public authorities? Is it simple or complicated?

Beatrix Bedone Pal: Public authorities in rural areas have fewer financial capacities to support the social enterprise sector, it is a bigger challenge and the public authorities should have been more engaged, committed to develop this sector than in bigger cities or in the capital.

Delfin: To foster social enterprises in remote rural areas, what first step would you recommend?

Beatrix Bedone Pal:

- 1) Build their communities and support their network within the region.
- 2) Organize capacity building events for stakeholders, financial institutions.
- 3) Keeping a database and following their journey in a regular follow up.
- 4) Disseminate the best practices in media and support their promotions.

Delfin: What “transnational action” would you suggest?

Beatrix Bedone Pal: Case study tours for groups of social enterprises and preparing videos on these case study tours and by that introduce the sector’s regional main actors.

Delfin: Thank you for your kind contribution.

4. SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN RURAL REGIONS - A NEW CHALLENGE BUT A POSSIBILITY?

Finally, this chapter presents the actual Transnational Strategy, which concludes the project work, summarises **general conclusions** and provides **key recommendations on specific steps** (from DelFin perspective and experience in rural regions) and can be understood as the essence of the DelFin methodology which is intended to be imitated. For further information on particular steps, the more detailed explanations in chapter 2 are recommended. We want to help potential imitators who envisage to engage in activities to support social entrepreneurship to get a more informed starting position.

For those readers who wish to benefit fully from DelFin's experience, please refer also to the expert interviews (see chapter 3), the four Regional Action Plans (see annexes) and the project website¹³.

General conclusions

In conclusion, it can be stated that in some cases there are good approaches to social entrepreneurship in some regions or that there are already established social enterprises. The interest is rising steadily as well as the importance of the social impact for the community.

However, for a better support some requirements are important, such as:

- providing adequate economic and financial support with respect to the special needs of social enterprises
- strengthening information (knowledge) and capacity (funding) building for new social entrepreneurs
- rising awareness of the role of social enterprises as key actors
- exploitation of potential synergies with the local regional economic activities
- creating programmes and support schemes

Whenever possible, when working together in a consortium, prior agreement on common concepts for approach and implementation is recommended before carrying out similar steps, to ensure the comparability, measurability and transferability of activities and their results.

¹³ <https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/Delfin.html>

Analyse the current situation in the region

Why?

As the fundamental step, an overview of the current situation in the region under consideration should be gained.

How?

An analysis is suitable to get an overview of at least demographic facts, economic and environmental situation as well as major societal challenges and situation of social entrepreneurship.

In case of several regions which want to join forces to develop further in each case, a subsequent joint analysis should be carried out, to analyse similarities and differences of the regions, the regional business support schemes and the needs of actions.

Especially, in order to describe and understand the situation of social enterprises, it is necessary to consider how social entrepreneurship is defined. This is handled differently in different regions.

Accompanying willingness to adapt to individual needs of social entrepreneurs

Why?

Social entrepreneurs are more likely to be driven by ideas or conviction and therefore less likely to be labour market driven, which means that they are less likely than profit-focused entrepreneurs to have mature business management skills.

A better understanding of social enterprises and their environment enables enterprise development methods and tools to be better customised.

How?

It is important to be prepared to be more flexible in the planning and implementation of the programmes, which should include attitude building, awareness raising, incubation, technical assistance, follow-up and networking activities, in addition to entrepreneurial and financial capacity development of the social enterprises and their representatives. Long-term strategies and support are essential for the target group.

Also essential is the conscious development of an environment that is “social enterprise friendly”. It should be based on the involving a wide range of stakeholders including existing structures of public authorities, business development organisations and financial institutions. This should be supported and accelerated by promotional campaigns using best practices and experienced social entrepreneurs as “local heroes”.

In order to develop tailor-made social enterprise development programmes meeting the needs and development stage of the respective social enterprise sector, expansion of the scope of the programme for civil society organisations should be considered.

The implementation of social enterprise development programmes usually requires more human resources than expected, so relevant staff directly dealing with (potential) social enterprises must be strengthened, trained and sensitised.

Networking

Why?

Networking helps to meet people at different professional levels and with different backgrounds of experience. This generally contributes to the exchange of information and ideas. Another important effect is that networking plays a role in the social well-being of the individuals that should not be underestimated.

How?

The development of a local or regional network of actors, especially the creation of a “core group”, working to find solutions is by no means self-propelling and cannot be left to chance. Building and maintaining networks requires a great deal of attention.

The Delfin project showed that a factor in the success of a project is, in addition to a central key player, the presence of adequate (but not too many) actors connected in a network. An ideal number is between five and eight people with a comprehensive range of competencies between them, who complement one another and who can work hand in hand together. New arrivals or those recently returned from elsewhere can be of additional help, as they often bring new ideas, perspectives, and experiences with them. Additionally, it is ideal if the network brings together not only the qualities of those with new ideas, but also of doers, resource procurers, those with craft skills, networkers, and communicators who are in the position of pushing forward the practical implementation of novel ideas.

Project intern work

The project partners participated in several live events before the Corona pandemic: the kick off in Magdeburg, Transnational Transfer Workshop in Zagreb, expert and multiplier workshop in Debrecen.

The first Delfin video was filmed before the pandemic, at locations in Duga Resa in Croatia and in Magdeburg, Germany, involving social entrepreneurs and project partners.

We recommend to hold as much meetings in presents as possible. Needless to say, in retrospective, it was much nicer to be able to follow the developments of the project live, and spend focused time with partners, talking about similarities and differences in our regions - nothing substitutes casual networking and live discussions.

Advantages and disadvantages of online meeting alternative

Online work and meetings are paradoxical, have both advantages and disadvantages

Online work is not a lossless substitute. Our experience was, that It distanced us from the social entrepreneurs who participated in the Pilots and it was difficult to follow and assess the impact of their business plans and work, as some of their planned activities were cancelled or stalled, or precarious. We dealt with it the only way one can, doing our best in the new circumstances.

Participants of online meetings can also be more easily distracted by the temptation of multitasking, e.g. checking emails during the ongoing meeting. On the other hand we were actually happy with how especially, despite project intern meetings with stakeholders, the public midterm impact and the final conference turned out - for online events with lots of speakers, we experienced it to be lively and interesting. Here, the skills of moderation and ideas for an active event design are once again of particular importance.

In addition, we were able to attract speakers and participants who might have been deterred from coming.

It was easier to network in the social enterprise ecosystem prior to the pandemic. The DelFin project is not an isolated project on the topic of the promotion of social entrepreneurship in Central Europe, and what we consider an irreplaceable loss is networking with other national and regional, or EU stakeholders, partners in other social enterprise Interreg projects during the same time, it could have taken place to a greater extent without pandemic. The multiplication of project results for all of us might have had a stronger impact on the social entrepreneur community were we able to merge activities and conferences, or market events of some kind more intense.

The distance also means the distance from project results, which because all are virtual, also sometimes feel as something not concrete enough. For this reason, whenever possible considering the epidemiological situation, number of attendees, size of space, we insisted on implementing live events.

Create a collection of support approaches

Why?

Collecting identified good practices and support instruments (existing and proven as well as envisaged; in the broad range between non-financial and financial) creates a valuable source of inspiration.

How?

In particular, other, possibly already completed, projects, funding databases or associations dedicated to social entrepreneurship could be a suitable source.

In a next step, this collection should be structured to be prepared to be discussed in a wider circle, which would make the challenges and limits of this known, but at the same time could also lead to new developments.

Also feel encouraged to use the DelFin Toolbox itself for your own purpose.

The DelFin Toolbox aims to provide support especially, but not exclusively, for public and financial institutions. It is an online compendium, available on: www.support4SE.eu.

So far, the Toolbox comprises three main topics:

- Business support structures/services (e.g. acceleration/incubators, training/coaching)
- Financing schemes (grants, loans and hybrid instruments)
- Evaluation tools (impact measurement, monitoring and scouting/market analysis)

It shows possibilities of existing tools and newly developed or adapted tools for the special needs of social entrepreneurship.

Testing of the collection of support approaches

Why?

In the course of testing, a more concrete examination of the specifics of the respective instrument takes place. In addition, the adaptation and/or transferability can be assessed more precisely. Important: The original economic, political, legislative and societal conditions determine the transferability in advance therefore it is crucial to be aware of these circumstances and take them into consideration when adopting tools from other regions or even countries.

In the pilot phase social entrepreneurs were able to benefit from group and individual mentoring sessions; coaching sessions that analysed their business model and plan; presentation of impact models; consultations in regard to development of individual financing and financing strategies.

If suitable intensified transnational exchange of experiences (for example, through Transnational Workshops involving also regional stakeholders) could be aspired, which could enable a bottom-up mutual learning process in the field of social enterprises and tool development and thus access to a network of social economy ecosystems of similar rural areas across Europe.

How?

Besides the successes, several challenges or even problems were identified in the Delfin pilot implementation as well as in the operation of the social enterprise ecosystems in the targeted rural regions.

These challenges were related mainly to the lack of local recognition of social enterprises and entrepreneurship. Other major problems reflected the lower interest and limited participation willingness of some participants (i.e. social enterprises) and stakeholders, as well as by unexpected events and circumstances. These challenges led us to make recommendations, based on the recommendations formulated by participants, stakeholders and the partners themselves in different stages of the pilot projects, regarding the better implementation of pilots and other future projects that promote social enterprises development in rural territories effective:

- Such programmes require accurate preparation, mapping and screening of the target group as well as the ecosystem.
- A better understanding of social enterprises and their environment enables enterprise development methods and tools to be better customised. In turn, strong flexibility is expected during the planning and implementation of the programmes, which should include attitude formation, awareness raising, incubation, technical support, follow-up, and networking activities beside the development of entrepreneurial and financial capacities of social enterprises and their representatives. Long-term strategies and support are essential in the case of the target group.
- Adopting and adjusting existing services, products and methods is strongly recommended on the one hand, but the involvement of innovative new tools and instruments like microloans or contests are also beneficial.
- Last but not least, conscious and accurate selection and impact measurement processes

Identifying common views between the action plans and the strategic approach

Why?

Here too, first of all, if several regions are involved, it is valuable to agree on a common approach for preparing the regional action plans for later comparability and evaluation.

In addition, the iterative creation process of the regional action plans itself already offers the possibility to benefit from the broad landscape of ideas and to open up the possibility of self-commitment by involving the relevant stakeholders in each case.

Alternatively, the creation of a draft regional action plan, for which only feedback from relevant stakeholders would be collected in a circular procedure, would certainly be less fruitful in terms of results.

How?

Based on the before gone steps (i.e. analysis, exchanges, gained experiences, testings of instruments) regions pursuing further development are ready to start the steps to develop, through a “bottom-up” (see “Why?”) a regional action plan, that aims at the next few years. It must necessarily take into account national and european strategies of superordinate importance, e.g. in the Delfin project this was the European Commission’s Social Economy Action Plan published in December 2021 (see also chapter 5), that was reflected and operationalized by the Delfin’s RAPs.

To be more specific with suggestions: The action plans should contain descriptions of concrete activities, timeline, financial resources and responsible implementers/stakeholders. The action plans should be agreed formally by implementers/stakeholders to emphasise its importance for regional development and to be able to use it as a basis for interim evaluation.

Be open for the unexpected

Why?

Not everything can be planned or be foreseen, despite the best project management. We have experienced this globally through different unpredictable obstacles. E.g. the COVID pandemic and the related economic and employment crisis as well as the crisis management measures applied by national governments hindered the implementation of physical activities, complicated then networking-related activities, made more difficult the involvement and engagement of target group members and stakeholders. Other “vis maior” events (like earthquake in Croatia or floods in Italy during project implementation) had similar effect on the Delfin pilots as they diverted the interest of target group members and stakeholders from the pilot implementation.

In addition, we were also hit by logistical/physical obstacles. Some partners reported that the physical and/or logistical requirements were not available for adopting and testing certain tools (e.g. late start of operation in case of local business incubator in Croatia, lack of online infrastructure in remote areas in Italy).

How?

First, using the inner potential of mindset can turn out to be a “real superpower” that releases concentration and creativity in the actors involved.

And from a practical point of view following some recommendations

- Handling unpredictable obstacles: where suitable using and exploiting online opportunities (e.g. transferring physical activities to online platforms, using online contents, building on webinars) to overcome obstacles that may be caused mainly by the COVID situation or other “vis maior” events.
- Overcoming logistical/physical obstacles: Preliminary analysis of the logistical/physical requirements of applying the selected tools and the assets and infrastructural facilities given in the targeted regions as well as flexibility were essential to establish alternative solutions and overcome logistical and physical obstacles.

Suggestions for Policy Makers

In the following boxes, we gathered suggestions for policy makers.

The partners make the following general suggestions:

AT REGIONAL/COUNTRY LEVEL

1) Key players, networks, involvement of the general public

- Provide competent contact partners at the municipal/regional level who can pave the way for socially innovative initiatives (e.g. by establishing further contacts)
- Accompany the identification, acquisition, establishment, motivation, and retention of key players
- Accompany and possibly support a very systematic expansion of networks (core groups, mobilisable campaigners, supporting stakeholders)
- Attract and integrate new arrivals and recently returned inhabitants; foster a welcoming atmosphere
- Find supporters and request their symbolic support; they should also be aware of their responsibilities and communicate a well-reasoned endorsement
- Support the timely involvement of the public as well as suitable formats for communication and participation within the community or region

2) Digitalisation and digital tools, practical requirements of new solutions, cooperation between actors and administration, financial resources

- Accompany and support social entrepreneurs in the assessment of potentially useful digital technologies and applications
- Possibly cover the cost of licenses for the use of community-related digital applications
- Possibly support training to improve digital skills in the rural population
- Accompany and support in compliance with the requirements of a (legally, technologically, financially, and economically) suitable solution
- Help actors to maintain a healthy cooperation with local authorities; offer whatever knowledge is required

3) Raise awareness of innovative approaches among employees in municipal and regional administration

- Provide competent contact partners at the state level for communities with socially innovative initiatives
- Create funding programmes for key players as a driving force in socially innovative initiatives: through the remuneration of expenses
- Create funding programmes for state-wide, innovation-specific training, consultancy, coaching, and mentoring of actors in the areas of coordination, networking, local communicative activities, and involvement of the public
- Continue to increase investment and urgency in the expansion of broadband or other technologies required for fast internet
- Promote funding programmes to subsidise the implementation of digital technologies and applications in the countryside, combined with the promotion of training to obtain digital competencies

4) Organisation of knowledge

- Formulate supportive actions towards actors as a criterion; encourage cross-departmental action
- Do not increase unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles in municipal and regional administration; instead, reduce them where possible
- Accompany and support the acquisition of financial resources and the exploration of financing options; provide information on advisory services
- Offer actors support in organising knowledge on existing information services, training, consultancy, and coaching
- Encourage actors to cultivate knowledge exchanges with similar initiatives regarding challenges and possible solutions, and to learn from the mistakes or success of others

AT EU LEVEL

- Understand the services and potential offered by social enterprises for rural development at the EU level
- Promote de-bureaucratisation in the administrative conduct of EU projects

5. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

This Transnational Strategy is the final output of DelFin. It is the product of intelligent, dedicated and collaborative working between the project-partners and their stakeholders. The DelFin Consortium offers others the insights into the project work and findings contained therein, as well as conclusions and recommendations.

DelFin and Central Europe

DelFin's field of action was in four contrasting sub-regions, offering diversity in culture, experience, government structures and geography. Therefore, the lessons learned can be shared with confidence across the Central Europe Programme Area.

Social entrepreneurship in remote rural regions is in most ways no different from more populated and accessible areas. The entrepreneurs do not think of themselves in this way, they are motivated by the challenge they have decided to take on. They are often surprised (and sometimes wary) that public policy should take an interest. Their needs for support vary, but are recognisably "mainstream".

DelFin has confirmed that the quadruple helix applies to social enterprises in remote rural regions. More important, we conclude that an intimate knowledge of the local ecosystem is required in order to match the support to the needs.

We also confirm that awareness-raising should be a high priority. In smaller communities, especially those with a tradition of self-reliance, folk are often unaware that support is available, even that they are "social entrepreneurs" and therefore of interest to public policy.

Which leads in turn to our main conclusion: do it "bottom-up". Specifically, we recommend to:

- use, maintain and develop the DelFin Toolbox (it's online, and the project-partners intend to maintain it in the next years)
- prepare and implement a 3-year Action Plan for your region, using the quadruple helix methodology to identify priorities and involve all the relevant stakeholders.

DelFin and the European Union

In December 2021 the European Commission published its Social Economy Action Plan to set out the policy focus for the next 9 years. It focuses on the following:

- Creating the right conditions for the social economy to thrive – improving the legal and policy framework and promoting the social economy.
- Opening opportunities for social economy organisations to start up and scale up – supporting social businesses and innovation, increasing access to funding and creating linkages between the social economy and the green and digital transitions.
- Making sure the social economy and its potential are recognised – mapping, collecting and analysing data on the social economy and raising public awareness of the social economy.

Enhanced support to the social economy not only creates jobs, but also allows organisations to increase their social impact across the EU. The Social Economy Action Plan smooths the way for social entrepreneurship to prosper and grow. DelFin shows the way, not only for remote regions in Central Europe, but more broadly. Through boosting social enterprises we can create a social economy.

6. ANNEXES: REGIONAL ACTION PLANS

The full contents of the DelFin Partners' Regional Action Plans can be found on the following pages.

- (1) Saxony-Anhalt Region, Germany
- (2) Hajdú-Bihar County, Hungary
- (3) Town of Duga Resa and Karlovac County, Croatia
- (4) Piemonte, Italy

Saxony-Anhalt (GER) Action Plan

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PART 1 – OVERVIEW	TEIL 1 - ÜBERSICHT
<p>Challenges related to the project topic</p>	<p>Projektbezogene Herausforderungen</p>
<p>In the rural areas of the federal state Saxony-Anhalt, the main challenges that social entrepreneurs face are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Societal changes: ageing and decreasing population; social and societal cohesion, rural development, infrastructure, digitalization (see also Kompetenzzentrum Soziale Innovation (KomZ) SI survey 2020¹) (2) Lack of awareness/familiarity → social enterprises do not perceive themselves as such → gap between voluntary activities and entrepreneurial problem-solving approaches (3) Establishment of a functioning ecosystem in the predominantly rural area of Saxony-Anhalt. (4) Existing business support structures/financing instruments are not explicitly addressing social enterprises and their special needs due to low awareness of this new topic (5) Strategic political support for social enterprises (state strategy/note: included in the new coalition agreement) <p>To address these challenges, social entrepreneurship in rural areas should be supported since it could contribute to improve the local socio-economic conditions. For example, social enterprises could deliver services and provide common goods that otherwise would not be granted, neither by the state nor the market. In this way, social enterprises could contribute to ensure an adequate system of services to local communities that also counteracts depopulation trends. In addition, social enterprises can train and educate people, thus contributing to create job opportunities for young generations and to increase the stock of knowledge and skills available in local labour</p>	<p>In den ländlichen Gebieten des Bundeslandes Sachsen-Anhalt stehen Sozialunternehmer² den nachfolgenden wichtigsten Herausforderungen, gegenüber:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Gesellschaftliche Veränderungen: Alterung und Rückgang der Bevölkerung; sozialer und gesellschaftlicher Zusammenhalt, ländliche Entwicklung, Infrastruktur, Digitalisierung (siehe auch Kompetenzzentrum Soziale Innovation (KomZ) SI-Umfrage 2020¹) (2) Mangelndes Bewusstsein/Bekanntheit → soziale Unternehmen nehmen sich selbst nicht als solche wahr → Kluft zwischen ehrenamtlichen Tätigkeiten und unternehmerischen Problemlösungsansätzen (3) Aufbau eines funktionierendes Ökosystem im überwiegend ländlichen Raum Sachsen-Anhalts (4) Bestehende Unterstützungsstrukturen/Finanzierungsinstrumente für Unternehmen gehen nicht explizit auf Sozialunternehmen und ihre speziellen Bedürfnisse ein, da das Bewusstsein für diesen neuen Themenbereich gering ist (5) Strategische politische Unterstützung der Sozialunternehmen (Landesstrategie/Anmerkung: im neuen Koalitionsvertrag verankert) <p>Um diese Herausforderungen zu bewältigen, sollte soziales Unternehmertum in ländlichen Gebieten unterstützt werden, da es zur Verbesserung der lokalen sozioökonomischen Bedingungen beitragen kann. So können Sozialunternehmen beispielsweise Dienstleistungen erbringen und Gemeinschaftsgüter bereitstellen, die sonst weder vom Staat noch vom Markt gewährt würden. Auf diese Weise können Sozialunternehmen dazu beitragen, ein angemessenes System von Dienstleistungen für lokale Gemeinschaften anzubieten, das auch den Entvölkerungstendenzen entgegenwirkt. Darüber hinaus können</p>

¹ Kompetenzzentrum Soziale Innovation: https://soziale-innovation.sachsen-anhalt.de/fileadmin/Bibliothek/Politik_und_Verwaltung/MS/Soziale_Innovation/PDF_s/Sonstiges/20201217_KomZ_Jahresbericht_2020.pdf

² Aus Gründen der besseren Lesbarkeit wird bei Personenbezeichnungen und personenbezogenen Hauptwörtern in diesem Dokument die männliche Form verwendet. Entsprechende Begriffe gelten im Sinne der Gleichbehandlung grundsätzlich für alle Geschlechter. Die verkürzte Sprachform hat nur redaktionelle Gründe und beinhaltet keine Wertung.

<p>markets, also potentially attracting talent from other geographical areas and motivating young, emigrated people to return.</p>	<p>Sozialunternehmen Menschen aus- und weiterbilden und so dazu beitragen, Beschäftigungsmöglichkeiten für junge Generationen zu schaffen. Des Weiteren kann der Bestand an Kenntnissen und Fertigkeiten auf den lokalen Arbeitsmärkten erhöht werden, was möglicherweise auch Talente aus anderen Regionen anzieht und junge Abgewanderte zur Rückkehr motiviert.</p>
<p>Objectives of the DelFin tandem partners</p>	<p>Ziele der DelFin-Tandempartner</p>
<p>The aim is to address these challenges by developing social entrepreneurship in the region. Our targets are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Strengthen the promotion of social entrepreneurship start-ups in Saxony-Anhalt through various actions to increase the start-up rate (2) To create visibility and awareness of social entrepreneurship through the expansion of the network. (3) Address barriers for social entrepreneurs through the implementation of targeted actions to contribute the long-term socio-economic development of Saxony-Anhalt and its communities. 	<p>Es sollen diese Herausforderungen durch die Entwicklung des sozialen Unternehmertums in der Region angegangen werden. Unser Ziele sind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Stärkung der Förderung von Sozialenunternehmensgründungen in Sachsen-Anhalt durch verschiedene Aktionen zur Erhöhung der Gründungsrate. (2) Schaffung der Sichtbarkeit und eines Bewusstsein für soziales Unternehmertum durch den Ausbau des Netzwerks in Sachsen-Anhalt. (3) Umsetzung gezielter Maßnahmen zur Beseitigung von Hindernissen für soziale Unternehmer, um einen Beitrag zur langfristigen sozioökonomischen Entwicklung Sachsens-Anhalts und seiner Kommunen zu leisten.
<p>Proposed Actions</p>	<p>Vorgeschlagene Maßnahmen</p>
<p>Action 1: Ecosystem</p>	<p>Maßnahme 1: Ökosystem</p>
<p>The aim is to create an active ecosystem and network with all relevant players from business, science, civil society, and politics. This action is be supported by the following activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Development of a social innovation strategy (2) Establishment of a central coordination office (e.g., scouting initiatives, establish and maintain an Advisory Board for Social Entrepreneurship, communication platform) (3) Involvement of universities for knowledge transfer to young generation of founders 	<p>Es soll ein aktives Ökosystem und ein Netzwerk mit allen relevanten Akteuren aus Wirtschaft, Wissenschaft, Zivilgesellschaft und Politik geschaffen werden. Diese Maßnahme soll durch folgende Aktivitäten unterstützt werden:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Entwicklung einer sozialen Innovationsstrategie (2) Aufbau einer zentralen Koordinationsstelle (z. B. durch Scouting von Initiativen, Aufbau und Pflege eines Beirats für soziales Unternehmertum, Kommunikationsplattform) (3) Einbindung von Hochschulen zum Wissenstransfer für soziales Unternehmertum/soziale Innovation für die junge Gründergeneration

Action 2: Business support	Maßnahme 2: Unternehmensförderung
<p>The aim is to develop business support structures for social enterprises through these activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Enrichment of classic start-up support (e.g., trainings for existing business support providers) (2) Consulting services for local initiatives 	<p>Es sollen durch folgende Aktivitäten Unterstützungsstrukturen für Sozialunternehmen entwickelt werden:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Erweiterung der klassischen Gründungsförderung (z. B. durch Existenzgründerqualifizierungsmaßnahmen und Unterstützung zur Gründung) (2) Beratungsleistungen für lokale Initiativen
Action 3: Financing instruments	Maßnahme 3: Finanzierungsinstrumente
<p>The aim is to improve finance or funding instruments directly supporting social enterprises through these activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Within the preparation of the new EU-Funding period 2021-2027, the funding guidelines will be reviewed and adjusted. (Opening or supplementing existing offers) (2) Develop funding opportunities for competitions for social entrepreneurs. 	<p>Es sollen die Finanz- und Förderinstrumente zur direkten Unterstützung von Sozialunternehmen durch folgende Aktivitäten verbessert werden:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Im Rahmen der Gestaltung der neuen EU-Förderperiode 2021-2027 werden die Förderrichtlinien überprüft und angepasst. (Öffnung oder/und Ergänzung bestehender Angebote) (2) Erschließen von Finanzierungsmöglichkeiten für Wettbewerbe für Sozialunternehmer
Action 4: Transnational cooperation	Maßnahme 4: Transnationale Zusammenarbeit
<p>The aim is to cooperate transnationally in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The aim is to continue using and extending the “Toolbox for Promotion of Social Entrepreneurship in rural regions“, (here in after named toolbox, accessible online via www.support4SE.eu) to improve the support instruments for social entrepreneurship. The translation of relevant tools is aspired. 	<p>Es soll auf folgende Weise länderübergreifend zusammengearbeitet werden:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Wir werden die “Toolbox for Promotion of Social Entrepreneurship in rural regions“, (nachfolgend Toolbox genannt, online erreichbar über www.support4SE.eu) weiter nutzen und ausbauen, um die Instrumente zur Unterstützung für soziales Unternehmertum zu verbessern. Die Übersetzung von relevanten Tools wird angestrebt.

PART 2 – ACTIONS IMPLEMENTATION	TEIL 2 – IMPLEMENTIERUNG DER MAßNAHMEN
Action 1: Ecosystem	Maßnahme 1: Ökosystem
Activity 1 (1): Development of a social innovation strategy	Aktivität 1 (1): Entwicklung einer sozialen Innovationsstrategie
<p>Social innovations touch on the competences of different departments of the state government, are high- or low-tech and have different impact models and financing options. In order to adequately promote social innovations in the federal state of Saxony-Anhalt, it is therefore advisable to develop a strategy to fully display their potential.</p> <p>The activity will include following main tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Development of a social innovation strategy in Saxony-Anhalt (2) Establishment of central coordination by a ministry provided 	<p>Soziale Innovationen berühren die Zuständigkeiten verschiedener Ressorts der Landesregierung, sind high- oder low-tech und haben unterschiedliche Wirkungsmodelle und Finanzierungsmöglichkeiten. Um soziale Innovationen im Land Sachsen-Anhalt adäquat zu fördern ist es daher ratsam, eine Strategie zu entwickeln, um deren Potential voll zu entfalten.</p> <p>Die Aktivität wird folgende Hauptaufgaben umfassen:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Entwicklung einer Strategie für soziale Innovation in Sachsen-Anhalt (2) Einrichtung einer zentralen Koordination durch ein Ministerium vorgesehen
<p>Output/Indicator(s):</p> <p>* It seems reasonable to us to involve different departments (science, social affairs, economy & environment) and stakeholders (welfare, companies, regional foundations and civil society).</p>	<p>Output/Indikator(en):</p> <p>* Es erscheint uns sinnvoll, verschiedene Ressorts (Wissenschaft, Soziales, Wirtschaft und Umwelt) und Stakeholder (Wohlfahrt, Unternehmen, Stiftungen im Land und Zivilgesellschaft) einzubinden.</p>
<p>Milestones per year:</p> <p>2022/2023: Development of a social innovation strategy</p>	<p>Meilensteine pro Jahr:</p> <p>2022/2023: Entwicklung einer sozialen Innovationsstrategie</p>
<p>Key actors to be involved:</p> <p>Zentrum für Sozialforschung Halle e. V. (ZSH), business support provider Saalekreis District, SENSEA</p>	<p>Sich beteiligende Schlüsselakteure:</p> <p>Zentrum für Sozialforschung Halle e. V. (ZSH), Wirtschaftsförderung Saalekreis, SENSEA</p>
<p>Costs and financing sources:</p> <p>In this early stage, the costs cannot be mentioned, yet.</p>	<p>Kosten und Finanzierungsquellen:</p> <p>In diesem frühen Stadium können die Kosten noch nicht genannt werden.</p>
Activity 1 (2): Establishment of a central coordination office	Aktivität 1 (2): Aufbau einer zentralen Koordinierungsstelle
<p>Public administration, business support providers and, above all, social entrepreneurs need a first point of contact to get answers to their questions about social entrepreneurship and social innovations. In this respect, the KomZ has made an important start with its work to promote social innovations and social entrepreneurship in Saxony-Anhalt. It is important to integrate this beginning, preliminary work and experience of further partners into the new central coordination office. There is a need</p>	<p>Die öffentliche Verwaltung, Wirtschaftsförderungen und vor allem auch soziale Unternehmer benötigen eine erste Anlaufstelle um ihre Fragen zu sozialem Unternehmertum und sozialen Innovationen beantwortet zu bekommen. Das KomZ hat in dieser Hinsicht mit seiner Arbeit einen wichtigen Anfang geleistet, um soziale Innovationen und soziales Unternehmertum in Sachsen-Anhalt zu fördern. Es gilt diesen Anfang, Vorarbeiten und Erfahrungen weiterer Partner in die neue zentrale Koordinierungsstelle zu integrieren. Es bedarf sowohl einer zentralen Anlaufstelle für</p>

<p>for a central contact point for social start-ups/social entrepreneurship, social initiatives, and associations as well as decentralized contact at various locations in Saxony-Anhalt.</p> <p>On the one hand, the central coordination office should provide knowledge/expertise on request or knowledge transfer, and on the other hand, it should contact directly on its own initiative stakeholders in the area directly. The most important communication tasks are providing information, awareness rising, capacity building, knowledge transfer and strengthening the network.</p> <p>The activity will include following main tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Raising awareness of social entrepreneurship and social innovation (through (social media) campaigns and an own website). (2) Answering general questions from public administrations, business support providers and social entrepreneurs and referring them to adequate local support (pilot service). (3) Networking with and awareness risings of potential investors and funders for social enterprises in Saxony-Anhalt (4) Accompaniment of the country's strategy for social innovation (5) Implementation and support of events for the growing social entrepreneurship ecosystem (6) Collaboration with local contact points (7) Outreach counselling, e.g. at welfare organizations, volunteer agencies or municipal structures up to local mayors (8) Political work and strategic bundling (9) Focus on decentralized flagships and centralized knowledge transfer <p>This activity is supported by the interim establishment of a network office for Social Entrepreneurship in Saxony-Anhalt (SENSA) in 2021/2022, coordinated by Merseburg Innovation and Technology Center MITZ GmbH³ (here in after named MITZ GmbH), to support the activities of</p>	<p>soziale Gründungen/soziales Unternehmertum, Sozialinitiativen und -vereine als auch dezentraler Ansprechpartner an verschiedenen Standorten in Sachsen-Anhalt.</p> <p>Die zentrale Koordinierungsstelle sollte einerseits Wissen/Expertise auf Anfrage bereithalten bzw. vermitteln, als auch direkt auf relevante Akteure in der Fläche zugehen. Wichtigste Kommunikationsaufgaben sind: Informieren, Sensibilisieren, Kompetenzvermittlung, Wissensaustausch und Netzwerkstärkung</p> <p>Die Aktivität wird folgende Hauptaufgaben umfassen:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Sensibilisierung für soziales Unternehmertum und soziale Innovation (durch (Social Media-)Kampagnen und einen eigenen Webauftritt). (2) Beantwortung allgemeiner Fragen von öffentlichen Verwaltungen, Wirtschaftsförderungseinrichtungen und Sozialunternehmern und Weiterleitung an geeignete lokale Unterstützungsangebote (Pilotdienst). (3) Vernetzung mit und Sensibilisierung von potenziellen Investoren und Förderern für soziale Unternehmen in Sachsen-Anhalt (4) Begleitung der Strategie des Landes für soziale Innovationen (5) Durchführung und Unterstützung von Veranstaltungen für das wachsende Sozial-Unternehmer-Ökosystem (6) Zusammenarbeit mit lokalen Kontaktstellen (7) Aufsuchende Beratung, bei z. B. Wohlfahrtsverbänden, Ehrenamts-Agenturen oder kommunalen Strukturen bis zu Ortsbürgermeistern/Dorfbürgermeistern (8) Politische Arbeit und strategische Bündelung (9) auf dezentrale Aushängeschilder und zentrale Vermittlung setzen <p>Unterstützt wird diese Aktivität durch die zwischenzeitliche Einrichtung einer Netzwerkstelle für soziales Unternehmertum in Sachsen-Anhalt (SENSA) im Jahr 2021/2022, koordiniert durch die MITZ GmbH³, zur Unterstützung der Aktivitäten der sozialen Unternehmer und der Entwicklungsphase der zentralen Koordinierungsstelle.</p>
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³ MITZ GmbH supports start-ups and young technology-oriented companies. The focus is on leasing, consulting and project management. Die MITZ GmbH unterstützt Gründer und junge technologieorientierte Unternehmen. Der Fokus liegt auf Beratung, Vermietung von Büroräumen und Projektarbeit

<p>social entrepreneurs and the development phase of the central coordination office.</p>	
<p><u>Output/Indicator(s):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * It seems reasonable to us to enable the following staff positions: 100% leader, 75% start up coaching, 50% community management, 50% Assistance. * It can be assumed that the investment in the ecosystem will only pay off after around 3 years. The allocation of sufficient funds for the work is therefore indispensable. 	<p><u>Output/Indikator(en):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Es erscheint uns sinnvoll, die folgenden Mitarbeiterpositionen zu ermöglichen: 100% Leiter, 75% Start-up-Coaching, 50% Community-Management, 50% Assistenz. * Es ist davon auszugehen, dass sich die Investition in das Ökosystem erst nach ca. 3 Jahren auszahlen wird. Die Bereitstellung von ausreichenden Mitteln für die Arbeit ist daher unerlässlich.
<p><u>Milestones per year:</u></p> <p>2022: Development phase of centralized coordination office supported by established network office SENSEA</p> <p>2023-2024: Implementation phase</p> <p>2025: Stabilization phase</p>	<p><u>Meilensteine pro Jahr:</u></p> <p>2022: Entwicklungsphase zum Aufbau der zentralen Stelle unterstützt durch Etablierung der Netzwerkstelle SENSEA</p> <p>2023-2024: Umsetzungsphase</p> <p>2025: Stabilisierungsphase</p>
<p><u>Key actors o be involved:</u></p> <p>Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Gender Equality of Saxony-Anhalt supported by SENSEA and other stakeholders</p>	<p><u>Sich beteiligende Schlüsselakteure:</u></p> <p>Ministerium für Arbeit, Soziales, Gesundheit und Gleichstellung des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt unterstützt von SENSEA und weiteren Stakeholder/Beirat</p>
<p><u>Costs and financing sources:</u></p> <p>Costs SENSEA network office: approx. 70.000 € (Saxony-Anhalt REGIO)</p> <p>Costs central office-operation: approx. 250.000 €</p> <p>Costs central office-projects/initiatives: approx. 450.000 €</p>	<p><u>Kosten und Finanzierungsquellen:</u></p> <p>Kosten SENSEA-Netzwerkstelle: ca: 70.000 € (Sachsen-Anhalt REGIO)</p> <p>Kosten Zentrale Stelle-Betrieb: ca. 250.000 €</p> <p>Kosten Zentrale Stelle-Projekte/Initiativen: ca. 450.000 €</p>

Activity 1(3): Involvement of universities/start-up services	Aktivität 1 (3): Einbindung von Universitäten/Hochschulen/Gründerservices
<p>Universities in particular offer the opportunity for (especially younger people) to become interested in social entrepreneurship. So far, this potential has not been sufficiently exploited, yet.</p> <p>The activity will include following main tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identification of universities that would like to participate in a social entrepreneurship program b) Financial support for the implementation of workshops and social entrepreneurship camps at the universities. c) Development of formats with the start-up services <p>The following formats, for example, could be offered at universities for students and university staff: Information events, action days or lecture series on social entrepreneurship, mandatory internships in social enterprises in the region, practical projects on lecture topics⁴, hackathons.</p>	<p>Vor allem Hochschulen bieten die Möglichkeit für vor allem jüngere Personen, sich für soziales Unternehmertum zu interessieren. Bisher wird dieses Potential noch nicht ausreichend genutzt.</p> <p>Die Aktivität wird folgende Hauptaufgaben umfassen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ermittlung von Universitäten/Hochschulen die an einem Programm für soziales Unternehmertum teilnehmen möchten b) Finanzielle Unterstützung für die Durchführung von Workshops und Camps für soziales Unternehmertum an den Universitäten/Hochschulen. c) Entwicklung von Formaten mit den Gründerservices <p>Folgende Formate könnten beispielsweise an den Hochschulen für Studierende und Hochschulangehörige angeboten werden: Informationsveranstaltungen, Aktionstage oder Ringvorlesungen zum Thema Social Entrepreneurship, Pflichtpraktika in Social Enterprises in der Region, Praxisprojekte zu Vorlesungsthemen⁴, Hackathons</p>
<p><u>Output/Indicator(s):</u></p> <p>* Due to the increased interest in the topic social entrepreneurship, the existing offer must be expanded, through additional seminars/workshops and improved advice on details such as legal forms for social entrepreneurs.</p>	<p><u>Output/Indikator(en):</u></p> <p>* Aufgrund des gestiegenen Interesses am Themenbereich des sozialen Unternehmertums muss das bestehende Angebot, durch zusätzliche Seminare/Workshops und verbesserte Beratung zu Details wie Rechtsformen für soziale Unternehmer, erweitert werden.</p>

⁴ Students are particularly interested in these practical courses. For example, the topic of a lecture in the health care system or psychology might be "Loneliness in old age". The students are then given the task of investigating the causes of this challenge in groups, finding solutions and designing an impact and business model to solve it.

Diese praxisnahen Angebote werden von Studierenden besonders interessiert angenommen. Thema einer Vorlesung im Fach Gesundheitssystem oder Psychologie kann bspw. „Einsamkeit im Alter“ sein. Die Studierenden erhalten daraufhin die Aufgabe, in Gruppen die Ursachen dieser Herausforderung zu untersuchen, Lösungen zu eruieren und ein Wirkungs- und Geschäftsmodell zu dessen Lösung zu konzipieren.

<p><u>Milestones per year:</u></p> <p>2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching for interested universities • Determine the need of social entrepreneurs at the universities. <p>2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering workshops at universities 	<p><u>Meilensteine pro Jahr:</u></p> <p>2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suche nach interessierten Hochschulen • Ermittlung des Bedarfs von sozialen Unternehmer an den Universitäten. <p>2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anbieten von Workshops an Hochschulen
<p><u>Key actors to be involved:</u></p> <p>Universities of applied science (HS)Merseburg, working group of the start-up services at the universities in Saxony-Anhalt</p>	<p><u>Sich beteiligende Schlüsselakteure:</u></p> <p>Hochschule (HS) Merseburg, AG der Gründerservices an den Hochschulen in Sachsen-Anhalt</p>
<p><u>Costs and financing sources:</u></p> <p>In this early stage the costs cannot be mentioned yet.</p> <p>Integration into the current start-up activities at the university to raise awareness. Actions beyond this need to be calculated.</p>	<p><u>Kosten und Finanzierungsquellen:</u></p> <p>In diesem frühen Stadium können die Kosten noch nicht genannt werden.</p> <p>Einbindung in die aktuellen Gründeraktivitäten an der Hochschule zur Sensibilisierung. Darüber hinausgehende Aktionen müssen kalkuliert werden.</p>

Action 2 – Business support	Maßnahme 2 – Unternehmensförderung
<p>Activity 2 (1): Enrichment of conventional start-up support (e.g., trainings for existing providers, opening founders-trainings for social founders) by using the results of the 2 DelFin capacity building workshops in September 2021 and the DelFin pilot projects Saxony-Anhalt</p>	<p>Aktivität 2 (1): Erweiterung der klassischen Gründungsunterstützung (z. B. Schulungen für bestehende Anbieter, Öffnung der Gründerschulungen für soziale Gründer) unter Nutzung der Ergebnisse der 2 DelFin-Capacity-building-Workshops im September 2021 und des DelFin-Pilotprojekts Sachsen-Anhalt</p>
<p>For most founders, conventional business support providers are the first point of contact for questions and support. Unfortunately, social entrepreneurs rarely receive the resources they need for a successful start-up.</p> <p>The activity will include following main tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Providing free workshops on social entrepreneurship start-up specifics for start-up advisors and funding decision-makers in Saxony-Anhalt over a period of 2 years (2) Opening of the founders-qualification-trainings in Saxony-Anhalt <p>Several start-up support programs, such as financing schemes, consulting and support services, are not explicitly geared to social entrepreneurs. As a result, they do not participate in these offers and their start-up is often supported less professionally.</p>	<p>Für die meisten Gründer sind konventionelle Wirtschaftsförderungen der erste Anlaufpunkt für Fragen und Unterstützung. Leider erhalten soziale Unternehmer: dort selten die Ressourcen, die sie für ihre geglückte Gründung benötigen.</p> <p>Die Aktivität wird folgende Hauptaufgaben umfassen:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Angebot von kostenlosen Workshops zu den Besonderheiten der Gründung von Sozialunternehmen für Gründungsberater und Entscheidungsträger im Bereich der Finanzierung in Sachsen-Anhalt über einen Zeitraum von 2 Jahren (2) Öffnung der Gründer-Qualifizierungs-Trainings in Sachsen-Anhalt <p>Viele Programme aus der Gründungsförderung, wie bspw. Finanzierungs-, Beratungs- oder Unterstützungsangebote, sind nicht explizit auf soziale Unternehmer ausgerichtet. Dies hat zur Folge, dass sie an diesen Angeboten nicht teilhaben und ihre Gründung nicht selten weniger professionell unterstützt wird.</p>
<p><u>Output/Indicator(s):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 3 essential workshops each a day and 3 professional workshops each half a day for approx. 80 participants should be sufficient to establish social entrepreneurship in the general start-up ecosystem * Expansion of qualification offers for social founders 	<p><u>Output/Indikator(en):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 3 grundlegende Ganztagsworkshops und 3 professionelle halbtägige Workshops für ca. 80 Teilnehmer sollten ausreichen, um soziales Unternehmertum im allgemeinen Start-up-Ökosystem zu etablieren. * Erweiterung der Qualifizierungsangebote für soziale Gründer
<p><u>Milestones per year:</u></p> <p>2022: Development/adjustment of the access requirements for founders to the courses/support offers.</p> <p>2023: Implementation in new EU funding period 2021-2027/course implementation</p>	<p><u>Meilensteine pro Jahr:</u></p> <p>2022: Erarbeitung/Anpassung der Zugangsvoraussetzungen für Gründer zu den Kursen/Unterstützungsangeboten</p> <p>2023: Umsetzung in neuer EU-Förderperiode 2021-2027/Kursumsetzung</p>

<p><u>Key actors to be involved:</u> Ministry of Economy, Tourism, Agriculture and Forestry of Saxony-Anhalt, supported by SEND e. V., SENSA, business support organizations (BSO), central coordination office, Saxony-Anhalt Community of Interest for Start-Up Advice and Support (IGSA)</p>	<p><u>Sich beteiligende Schlüsselakteure:</u> Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Tourismus, Landwirtschaft und Forsten des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt, unterstützt durch SEND e. V., SENSA, Wirtschaftsförderer, zentrale Koordinierungsstelle, Interessengemeinschaft Gründungsberatung und -begleitung Sachsen-Anhalts (IGSA)</p>
<p><u>Costs and financing sources:</u> for BSO-trainings: 7.000 € (in total for 6 sessions) for social entrepreneur-trainings: 5.500-6000 €/per social entrepreneur (in total for 25 sessions)</p>	<p><u>Kosten und Finanzierungsquellen:</u> für Wirtschaftsförderer-Schulungen: 7.000 € (insgesamt für 6 Sitzungen) für Sozialunternehmer-Schulungen: ca. 5.500-6.000 €/Sozialunternehmer (insgesamt für 25 Sitzungen)</p>
<p>Activity 2 (2): Consulting service for local initiatives</p>	<p>Aktivität 2 (2): Beratungsangebot für lokale Initiativen</p>
<p>The activity will include following main tasks: (1) Identify high-impact local initiatives that do not yet have a sustainable financing model (2) Establishment of a specially adapted consulting service for local initiatives, using the results of the DelFin pilot project</p>	<p>Die Aktivität wird folgende Hauptaufgaben umfassen: (1) Identifizierung wirkungsvoller lokaler Initiativen, die noch nicht über ein nachhaltiges Finanzierungsmodell verfügen (2) Einrichtung eines speziell angepassten Beratungsdienstes für lokale Initiativen unter Nutzung der Ergebnisse des DelFin-Pilotprojekts</p>
<p><u>Output/Indicator(s):</u> * Consulting services can be provided by private decentralized providers and start-up coaches with the support of a central coordination office</p>	<p><u>Output/Indikator(en):</u> * Beratungsleistungen können von privaten dezentralen Anbietern und Start-up-Coaches mit Unterstützung einer zentralen Koordinationsstelle erbracht werden</p>
<p><u>Milestones per year:</u> 2022: Establishing service, provide support for approx. 2-3 founders 2023: Providing support for approx. 5-10 founders</p>	<p><u>Meilensteine pro Jahr:</u> 2022: Aufbau des Dienstes, Unterstützung für etwa 2-3 Gründer 2023: Unterstützung für ca. 5-10 Gründer</p>
<p><u>Key actors:</u> SENSA and central coordination office</p>	<p><u>Sich beteiligende Schlüsselakteure:</u> SENSA und zentrale Koordinierungsstelle</p>
<p><u>Costs and financing sources:</u> In this early stage the costs cannot be mentioned yet.</p>	<p><u>Kosten und Finanzierungsquellen:</u> In diesem frühen Stadium können die Kosten noch nicht genannt werden.</p>

Action 3: Financing instruments	Maßnahme 3: Finanzierungsinstrumente
<p>Activity 3 (1): Within the preparation of the new EU funding period 2021-2027, the funding guidelines will be reviewed and adjusted. (Opening or supplementing existing offers)</p>	<p>Aktivität 3 (1): Im Rahmen der Gestaltung der neuen EU-Förderperiode 2021-2027 werden die Finanzierungsrichtlinien überprüft und angepasst. (Eröffnung oder Ergänzung bestehender Angebote)</p>
<p>Several start-up support programs, such as financing schemes, consulting and support services, are not explicitly geared to social entrepreneurs. As a result, they do not participate in these offers and their start-up is often supported less professionally.</p> <p>The activity will include following main tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Develop and propose adjustments of existing financing guidelines in cooperation with ministries (2) Promotional activities targeting social enterprises to raise awareness for financing opportunities (3) Raising awareness of financing consultants to ensure adequate advisory 	<p>Viele Programme aus der Gründungsförderung, wie bspw. Finanzierungs-, Beratungs- oder Unterstützungsangebote, sind nicht explizit auf soziale Unternehmer ausgerichtet. Dies hat zur Folge, dass sie an diesen Angeboten nicht teilhaben und ihre Gründung nicht selten weniger professionell unterstützt wird</p> <p>Die Aktivität wird folgende Hauptaufgaben umfassen:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Entwicklung und Vorschlag von Anpassungen der bestehenden Finanzierungsrichtlinien in Zusammenarbeit mit den Ministerien (2) Werbemaßnahmen für Sozialunternehmen, um das Bewusstsein für Finanzierungsmöglichkeiten zu schärfen (3) Sensibilisierung von Finanzierungsberatern, um eine angemessene Beratung zu gewährleisten
<p><u>Output/Indicator(s):</u></p> <p>* Available financing schemes are currently estimated to be used only sporadically by social enterprises, as they do not have any knowledge of their existence or do not find themselves in them. It is therefore necessary to inform social entrepreneurs separately about the new schemes.</p>	<p><u>Output/Indikator(en):</u></p> <p>* Zur Verfügung stehende Programme dürften von Sozialunternehmen vorerst nur sporadisch genutzt werden, da sie keine Kenntnis von den Angeboten haben oder sich darin nicht wiederfinden. Es ist daher notwendig, die Sozialunternehmer gesondert über die neuen Programme zu informieren.</p>
<p><u>Milestones per year:</u></p> <p>2022: Identification of programs relevant for social entrepreneurs</p> <p>2023: Providing information sessions about existing schemes to raise awareness</p>	<p><u>Meilensteine pro Jahr</u></p> <p>2022: Identifizierung von Programmen, die für Sozialunternehmer relevant sind</p> <p>2023: Angebot von Informationsveranstaltungen über bestehende Programme zur Sensibilisierung</p>

<p><u>Key actors to be involved:</u></p> <p>Ministry of Economy, Tourism, Agriculture and Forestry of Saxony-Anhalt</p> <p>Development Bank of Saxony-Anhalt/Investitionsbank Sachsen-Anhalt, Norddeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale (here in after named Regional Development Bank Saxony-Anhalt)</p> <p>Central coordination office supported by univations GmbH</p>	<p><u>Sich beteiligende Schlüsselakteure:</u></p> <p>Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Tourismus, Landwirtschaft und Forsten des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt</p> <p>Investitionsbank Sachsen-Anhalt, Norddeutsche Landesbank Girozentrale (nachfolgend Investitionsbank Sachsen-Anhalt genannt)</p> <p>Zentrale Koordinierungsstelle</p> <p>Unterstützt durch univations GmbH</p>
<p><u>Costs and financing sources:</u></p> <p>In this early stage the costs cannot be mentioned yet.</p>	<p><u>Kosten und Finanzierungsquellen:</u></p> <p>In diesem frühen Stadium können die Kosten noch nicht genannt werden.</p>
<p>Activity 3 (2): Develop funding opportunities for competitions for social entrepreneurs</p>	<p>Aktivität 3 (2): Erschließen von Finanzierungsmöglichkeiten für Wettbewerbe für Sozialunternehmer</p>
<p>In the future, social entrepreneurship can be given greater consideration in start-up schemes. This includes, for example, competitions. This results in the use of publicity-boosting means for the topic.</p> <p>The activity will include following main tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Open competition: Call for entries for a Saxony-Anhalt-wide competition for social entrepreneurs and other providers that are not accessible to social entrepreneurs (2) Theme-specific idea competitions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identification of urgent social challenges in Saxony-Anhalt b) Announcement of idea competitions to solve these challenges c) Winners receive financial support to implement ideas. <p>Including the social entrepreneurship aspects in regional founder competitions</p>	<p>Soziales Unternehmertum kann künftig in Gründungsangeboten stärker berücksichtigt werden. Dazu gehören bspw. Wettbewerbe. Dies hat zur Folge, dass diese öffentlichkeitswirksamen Mittel für das Thema genutzt werden.</p> <p>Die Aktivität wird folgende Hauptaufgaben umfassen:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Offener Wettbewerb: Ausschreibung eines sachsen-anhaltischen Wettbewerbs für Sozialunternehmer und andere Anbieter, die bisher für Sozialunternehmer nicht zugänglich sind (2) Themenspezifische Ideenwettbewerbe: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identifizierung dringender gesellschaftlicher Herausforderungen in Sachsen-Anhalt b) Ausschreibung von Ideenwettbewerben zur Lösung dieser Herausforderungen c) Gewinner erhalten eine Förderung zur Umsetzung ihrer Ideen <p>Einbeziehung der Aspekte des sozialen Unternehmertums in regionale Gründungswettbewerbe</p>

<p><u>Output/Indicator(s):</u></p> <p>* It is necessary to inform social entrepreneurs about existing competitions and creating theme-specific competitions to raise awareness of this topic and increase the visibility of social entrepreneurship.</p>	<p><u>Output/Indikator(en):</u></p> <p>* Es ist notwendig, Sozialunternehmer über bestehende Wettbewerbe zu informieren und themenspezifische Wettbewerbe zu schaffen, um das Bewusstsein für dieses Thema zu schärfen und die Sichtbarkeit des sozialen Unternehmertums zu erhöhen.</p>
<p><u>Milestones per year:</u></p> <p>2022: Development of an idea-competition for social entrepreneurs 2023: Implementation of an idea-competition for social entrepreneurship</p>	<p><u>Meilensteine pro Jahr:</u></p> <p>2022: Entwicklung eines Ideenwettbewerbs für soziales Unternehmertum 2023: Durchführung eines Ideenwettbewerbs für soziales Unternehmertum</p>
<p><u>Key actors:</u></p> <p>Ministry of Economy, Tourism, Agriculture and Forestry of Saxony-Anhalt supported by univations GmbH and universities</p>	<p><u>Sich beteiligende Schlüsselakteure:</u></p> <p>Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Tourismus, Landwirtschaft und Forsten des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt unterstützt durch univations GmbH, Wirtschaftsförderungen/Gründerzentren die Wettbewerbe durchführen</p>
<p><u>Cost and funding sources:</u></p> <p>In this early stage the costs cannot be mentioned yet.</p> <p>As a centralized competition: approx. 50.000 € including prize money</p>	<p><u>Kosten und Finanzierungsquellen:</u></p> <p>In diesem frühen Stadium können die Kosten noch nicht abschließend genannt werden.</p> <p>Als zentraler Wettbewerb: ca. 50.000 € inkl. Preisgelder</p>

Action 4: Transnational cooperation	Maßnahme 4: Transnationale Zusammenarbeit
<p>Activity 4 (1): We will continue to use and expand the "Toolbox for Promotion of Social Entrepreneurship in rural regions", (hereafter referred to as Toolbox, accessible online at www.support4SE.eu) to improve the tools to support social entrepreneurship. The translation of relevant tools will be pursued.</p>	<p>Aktivität 4 (1): Wir werden die "Toolbox for Promotion of Social Entrepreneurship in rural regions", (nachfolgend Toolbox genannt, online erreichbar über www.support4SE.eu) weiter nutzen und ausbauen, um die Instrumente zur Unterstützung für soziales Unternehmertum zu verbessern. Die Übersetzung von relevanten Tools wird angestrebt.</p>
<p>Output/Indicator(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Translation of relevant parts of the toolbox in German language * Increasing awareness of the toolbox in the ecosystem 	<p>Output/Indikator(en):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Übersetzung relevanter Werkzeuge aus der Toolbox in deutsche Sprache * Steigerung des Bekanntheitsgrades der Toolbox im Ökosystem
<p>Milestones per year:</p> <p>2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical and content-related maintenance of the toolbox • Extension of the toolbox by 1-2 tools • SENSEA: Creation of first working translations of tools <p>2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of the toolbox, extension by 1-2 tools if available • Evaluation of the toolbox in terms of usage and usability • Checking the relevance of the toolbox for the central coordination office • Potential handover of the toolbox to the central coordination office and if necessary final professional translation of relevant tools into German and, if necessary, other languages (in cooperation with our project partners) 	<p>Meilensteine pro Jahr:</p> <p>2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technischer und inhaltlicher Erhalt der Toolbox • Pflege der Toolbox und Erweiterung um 1-2 Werkzeuge • SENSEA: Erstellung von ersten Arbeitsübersetzungen von Tools <p>2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pflege der Toolbox, ggf. Hinzufügen von 1-2 Werkzeugen • Evaluierung der Toolbox im Hinblick auf Nutzung und Benutzerfreundlichkeit • Prüfung der Relevanz der Toolbox für die zentrale Koordinierungsstelle • Potentielle Übergabe der Toolbox an die zentrale Koordinierungsstelle und ggf. abschließende professionelle Übersetzung relevanter Tools ins Deutsche und ggf. andere Sprachen (in Zusammenarbeit mit unseren Projektpartnern)
<p>Key actors:</p> <p>SENSEA, central coordination office, regional development Bank of Saxony-Anhalt,</p>	<p>Sich beteiligende Schlüsselakteure:</p> <p>SENSEA, zentrale Koordinierungsstelle, Investitionsbank Sachsen-Anhalt,</p>
<p>Costs and financing sources:</p> <p>approx. 15.000 € per year (estimated costs for the translation of the toolbox into German)</p>	<p>Kosten und Finanzierungsquellen:</p> <p>Bis zur Schaffung der zentralen Koordinierungsstelle, können die Kosten noch nicht abschließend genannt werden, aktuelle Kostenschätzungen gehen von ca. 15.000 € für die Übersetzung der Toolbox ins Deutsche aus.</p>

**ACTION PLAN TO
BOOST ECOSYSTEM
FOR
SOCIAL ENTERPRISES
IN HAJDÚ-BIHAR
COUNTY**

FEBRUARY 2022



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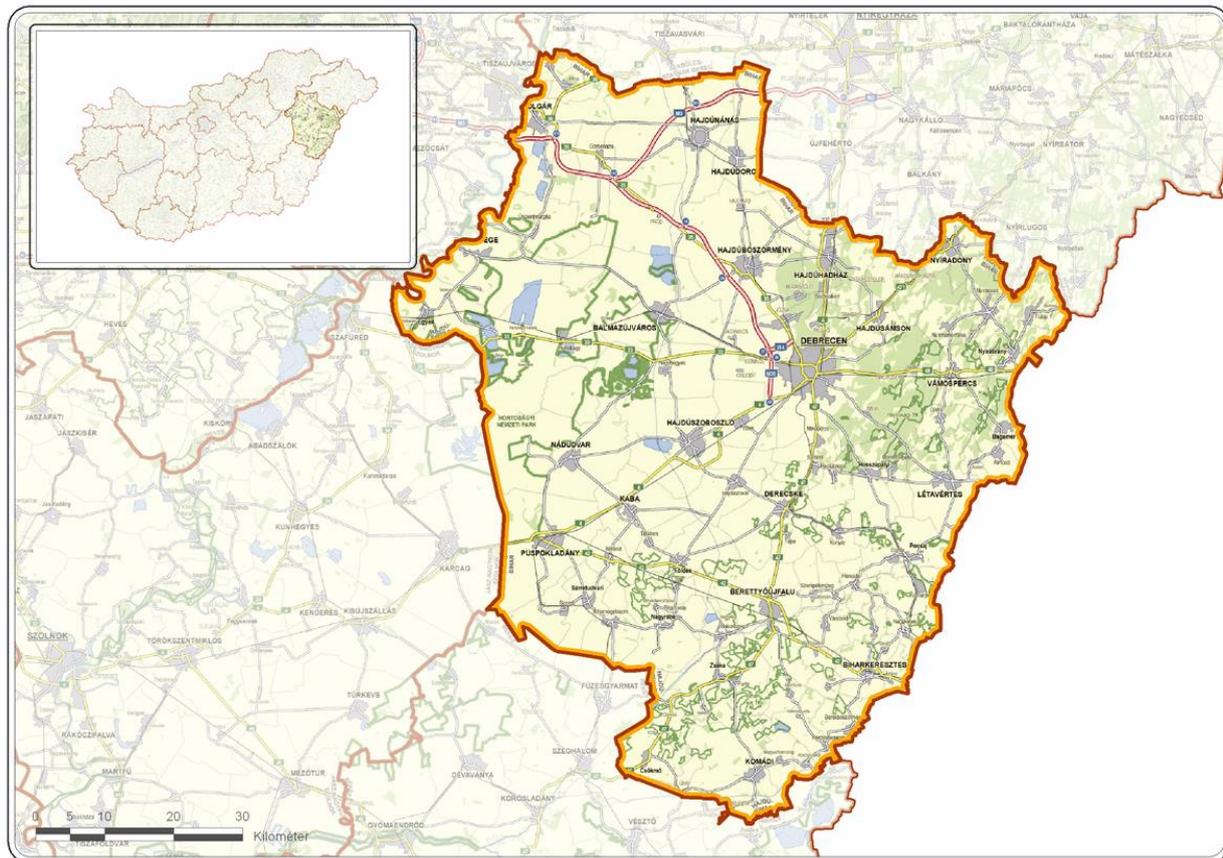
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Chapter 1 – Overview

Challenges¹



Hajdú-Bihar County with its area of 6 210 km² is situated in the Eastern part of the Great Hungarian Plain, bordered by Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg counties to the North, the Romanian border to the East, Békés county to the South and Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County to the West. It has four geographical units: the South Nyírség - Ligetalja area - and Erdőpuszta, the Bihari region, the Hortobágy and the Tisza region, and the Hajdúság.

¹ From AF: “European rural regions are currently facing several societal challenges, especially aging of population, brain drain and unemployment. Social innovation becomes more important to develop solutions to these problems and the promotion of social entrepreneurship (SE) is an important contribution to facilitate the economic transformation process especially in rural areas. Nevertheless, the traditional business support infrastructures and measures operated by regional or local authorities are not adapted to the special needs of social enterprises. There is a general lack of knowledge and understanding how social entrepreneurship evolves and works and how it can be efficiently promoted”.

By virtue of its location within the country, the county is peripheral, but it is playing an increasingly central role in the Eastern part, not only in terms of the neighbouring counties but also of border areas. This means not only transit - transport and economic - but also employment and cultural relations.

The county has 21 cities and 61 townships/villages of which 40 settlements are characterized by significant unemployment.

The proportion of disadvantaged population is higher than the national average, as is the proportion of those with lower incomes; most typical target groups of SEs are the poor and disadvantaged (45%), the unemployed (44%) and members of the workplace or local community (42%).

Social enterprises appear as a heterogeneous, diverse group in terms of social impact and business legal form, type of activity and attitude/purpose of the decision makers of the given social enterprise influence the extent to which the two basic pillars (social impact, business results). Their legal form varies: there are associations, social cooperatives, non-profit limited liability companies, foundations.

Most of the social enterprises carry out tasks in the social and health field; social/health related activities lead the activity fields, then comes education, training and culture.

As concerns rural regions in general – and particularly in Hajdú-Bihar County as the county is characterized by rural communities -, there are really specific situations and social objectives to consider.

The most relevant challenges that have been addressed within the DelFin project include the lack of proper information, training and mentoring opportunities for social enterprises and also the low willingness of social enterprises to take part in networking.

Beyond, there are several significant issues to deal with:

Lack of familiarity/awareness:

Most people are not yet familiar with social business, and thus cannot identify with their goals. The lack of visibility and effective communication results in isolation of the sector. These companies are not known to the public sector organization either, so they cannot effectively handle their needs and problems. Long-term partnerships with the for-profit sphere rarely develop.

Funding shortfalls:

Serving social goals and dealing with social problems often require significant human and financial resources. The availability of normative subsidies is limited. The use of not refundable grants is time consuming, imposes

a significant administrative burden on the organization and often poses a liquidity problem for post-financing. No benefits were granted to social enterprises.

Lack of a legal definition of social enterprise:

Due to the lack of a legal concept, social enterprises cannot be clearly separated from the for-profit or civil sector. Due to the lack of demarcation, research on social enterprises can only rely on research results when examining the sector. Strengthening the sector, supported developments, and an entrepreneur-friendly environment would require a comprehensive social enterprise development strategy that requires a legal basis.

Lack of business approach:

Due to the lack of a business approach, a grant-based activity is often unable to produce satisfactory results under market conditions. Often, they do not have a business plan, lack of demand estimation, and pricing is not well designed. Due to the lack of legal, financial and market knowledge, it would be necessary to provide organizations with practical training that can be applied in everyday operations.

Lack of solvent demand:

Particularly for start-up social enterprises, their revenues fall short of expectations, as they do not meet solvent demand. In the absence of a marketing strategy, geographic distances cause problems in many cases.

Human resources issues:

Organizations tend to fluctuate, and find it harder to get a better workforce because they are less able to secure salaries. In the currently available tender schemes, the salary of the target group members employed may not exceed HUF 240,000 (750 EUR) gross. Higher wages can only be met by a small number of organizations, eg. construction, furniture manufacturing, etc. territory. Efforts to maintain employee motivation are required.

Objectives

We will address the above challenges by **developing social entrepreneurship in the region**².

Our targets are:

- 10 % increase in the number of social enterprises with enhanced business and marketing skills by 2023 (baseline year: 2020)
- Solid network of HB county social enterprises with at least 10 members³

Actions

3 actions have been defined to support the objectives:



² From AF: “The main objective of the project is the promotion of social entrepreneurship in rural regions with special transformation challenges to advance economic and social innovation. The rural regions Saalekreis (DE), Hajdu Bihar (HU), Duga Resa (CR) and rural areas in Piedmont Region (IT) work together with the specific objective to improve funding for public support structures for social entrepreneurship and further develop finance and funding instruments for social enterprises. The project wants to facilitate a quadruple helix cooperation process of regional and local stakeholders for social entrepreneurship in a rural environment”.

³ Priority 3 of the Regional Development Strategic Plan (RDSP in the followings) of Hajdú-Bihar County (HBC in the followings) 2021-2027 states: “Social enterprises can play a key role as important actors in the local solution of global problems. It is more effective than a civic initiative because it does not necessarily require ongoing funding, but it also takes on tasks / goals that actors in the classic SME sector do not. Some of these businesses specifically target the disadvantaged, offering job opportunities, training and employment programs, so they can serve as a transit point for public employees to enter the open labour market, so their support is definitely justified.”

Action 1 - Business support

We will develop business support structures for social enterprises through these activities:

- (1) Making the DelFin Toolbox a 'living instrument' in Hajdú-Bihar county
- (2) Promotion of the 'social enterprise development' course of the University of Debrecen

Action 2 - Funding instruments

We will improve finance or funding instruments directly supporting social enterprises through these activities:

- (1) Promotion of UniCredit Social Banking Program in Hajdú-Bihar county
- (2) Promotion of Priority 3 of RDSP of HBC 2021-2027 with special regard to measures supporting the ecosystem for SEs

Action 3 - Transnational cooperation

We will cooperate transnationally in several ways to capitalize and share the knowledge and experience gained as well as to strengthen the transnational ecosystem for social enterprises.

Chapter 2 – Activities

Introduction of actions foreseen

Action 1 – Business support

Activity 1.1 - Making the DelFin Toolbox a 'living instrument' in Hajdú-Bihar County

The DelFin Toolbox is proved to be an impactful output of the DelFin project as it contains several effective business development tools which have been successfully tested for developing social enterprises within the frameworks of the regional pilot programs. Accordingly, Activity 1.1 aims at making the DelFin Toolbox continuously available and updated 'living instrument' for business support organizations in Hajdú-Bihar County to inspire them and support their business development services provided to social enterprises in the region.

To achieve these goals Activity 1.1 includes the following steps:

- Translation of the Toolbox into Hungarian to make it unlimitedly accessible for Hungarian stakeholders
- Creation of the dedicated online platform for the Toolbox to make it easily available for the targeted stakeholders
- Communication campaign to raise stakeholders' attention on the toolbox and its refreshments
- Continuous refreshing of the Toolbox (1 update/semester) to include new business support tools as well as financing schemes appearing on the national and international scene of social enterprise development
- Continuous provision of necessary human resources
 - IT expert for developing, maintaining and refreshing the online platform and the toolbox
 - Communication expert for managing communication campaigns related to the publication and refreshments of the toolbox

Output(s)/Indicator(s):

- 1 translated toolbox in Hungarian
- 1 online platform
- 1 communication campaign
- 2 updates of the toolbox

Milestones per year:

2022

- Translation of the Toolbox into Hungarian
- Creation of the online platform

2023

- Communication campaign
- 1st update

2024

- 2nd update

Key Actors:

- Hajdú-Bihar County Government

Cost and funding sources:

- Cost of IT expert at HBCG for the creation of platform and 2 updates 2500 EUR – funded by HBCG
- Cost of communication expert at HBCG for communication campaign 1500 EUR – funded by HBCG
- Translation of toolbox 1500 EUR funded by HBCG

Activity 1.2 - Promotion of the ‘social enterprise development’ course of the University of Debrecen

The Faculty of Economics of the University of Debrecen has been running a social enterprise development course in every second semester for years. The course intends to provide practical knowledge and experience to university students on the field of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise development by connecting students and social enterprises and facilitating their cooperation for solving real life business problems.

Accordingly, university students analyse the business models and operational problems of active social enterprises and provide them consultancy and development services within the frameworks of the course. The course had been added to the toolbox and some of its elements have been successfully tested within the frameworks of the regional pilot program implemented by the Hajdú-Bihar County Government.

During the implementation of the pilot, it turned out that the weakness of the program is its relatively low awareness among social enterprises of which only a few can enjoy the benefits of the course. In order to tackle this weakness and provide access for more social enterprises to this unique and free business development opportunity, Hajdú-Bihar County Government will promote the course within the frameworks of

Activity 1.2 which includes the following steps:

- Integration of lessons learnt and recommendations formulated during the pilot phase of the Delfin project regarding providing business support services to SEs into the program of the course
- Promotion of the course among students of the University of Debrecen (1 campaign/year) to attract the most talented and improve the quality of the social enterprise development services provided within the frameworks of the course
- Promotion of the development opportunity among social enterprises in Hajdú-Bihar County (1 campaign/year) to attract as many as possible, to increase the accessibility of the services provided by the course as well as the number of social enterprises benefitting from these services.
- Implementation of the course (1/year)
- Evaluation

Output(s)/Indicator(s):

- 3 communication campaigns (1/year)
- 3 courses implemented (1/year)
- 18 university students participating in the course (6/year)
- 9 social enterprises participating in the course (3/year)

Milestones per year

2022

- 1st communication campaign
- 1st course

2023

- 2nd communication campaign
- 2nd course

2024

- 3rd communication campaign
- 3rd course

Key Actors:

- University of Debrecen (Katonáné dr. Kovács Judit)

Cost and funding sources:

- Integration of lessons learnt from DelFin pilot and implementation of the course will be done by University of Debrecen (Katonáné dr. Kovács Judit) and costs will be funded by UD. Cost: personnel cost of Katonáné dr. Kovács Judit
- Communication campaign will be funded by HBCG – personnel cost of communication expert 2000 EUR/campaign

Action 2 – Financing Instruments

Activity 2.1 Promotion of UniCredit Social Banking Program in Hajdú-Bihar County

Social Impact Banking ("SIB") is UniCredit's commitment to building a fairer and more inclusive society by identifying, financing and promoting initiatives that can have a positive social impact. The programme, which started in Italy at the end of 2017, has now been extended to 10 other Group countries (Austria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Serbia, Hungary).

Social Impact Banking allows UniCredit to help people at risk of financial exclusion and companies committed to addressing social issues.

Within the frameworks of the program UniCredit gives confidence, value the talent and merit, support the financial awareness, and provides credit, skills and access to key networks to the above target groups. Working in partnership with a focus on both, the economic returns of investments and the generation of wider societal benefits are the main values of the program.

UniCredit Hungary has participated in the implementation of the DelFin project both as service provider and participant of the capacity building seminars. Based on the experiences gained, the bank identified significant benefits of the improvement of its social impact banking program that Activity 2.1 is focusing on.

The implementation of the activity includes the following steps:

- Revision of the social banking program of the UniCredit Bank
- Integration of lessons learnt and recommendations formulated during the pilot phase of the DelFin project regarding providing financial support to SEs

- Market search - mapping the potential local market for the financial products offered by the social banking program of UniCredit
- Identification of relevant financial products on the local market with the greatest sales potential
- Tailoring the selected products to the actual local market needs
- Preparation of the local sales staff of UniCredit for the sales of new (social finance) products for new target groups
 - Sensitizing for the specific characteristics of social enterprises and the problems and social groups targeted by them
 - Knowledge transfer about social entrepreneurship, impact measurement, social finance tools and the concrete products of the bank
- Promotion campaign for the financial products offered by UniCredit to social enterprises within the frameworks of the bank's social banking program
- Sales of the financial products

Output(s)/Indicator(s):

- Sensitizing and knowledge transfer trainings for the sales staff of UniCredit (4 trainings 30 participants)
- 25 social enterprises receiving financial support
- 500,000 EUR financial support provided for SEs

Milestones per year

2022

- Market search – tailor made financial products
- Preparation of the local sales staff of UniCredit
 - 2 sensitizing and knowledge transfer trainings

2023

- Preparation of the local sales staff
 - 2 sensitizing and knowledge transfer trainings
- Promotion campaign
- Sales (10 new clients, 200,000 EUR financial support provided)

2024

- Sales (15 new clients, 300,000 EUR financial support provided)

Key Actors:

- UniCredit Bank Hungary (Bolyán Róbert)

-
- Impact Hub Budapest (preparation, Bedő Beatrix)

Cost and funding sources:

- 10,000 EUR (UniCredit Bank Hungary Social Impact Banking Program)

Activity 2.2 - Promotion of Priority 3 of RDSP of HBC 2021-2027 with special regard to measures supporting the ecosystem for SEs

Priority 3 of the Regional Development Strategic Plan (RDSP in the followings) of Hajdú-Bihar County (HBC in the followings) 2021-2027 states: "Social enterprises can play a key role as important actors in the local solution of global problems. It is more effective than a civic initiative because it does not necessarily require ongoing funding, but it also takes on tasks / goals that actors in the classic SME sector do not.

Some of these businesses specifically target the disadvantaged, offering job opportunities, training and employment programs, so they can serve as a transit point for public employees to enter the open labour market, so their support is definitely justified."

The achievement of the objectives of the RSDP related to the development of social enterprises is supported by Activity 2.2 through the following steps:

- Revision of the Measure 3.4 (Supporting SMEs to improve their innovation capacity), Measure 3.9 (Developments related to local economy, strengthening short supply chains) and Measure 3.11 (Creative and cultural industry) of RDSP of HBC 2021-2027
- Integration of lessons learnt and recommendations formulated during the pilot phase of the DelFin project regarding providing financial support to SEs
- Identification of the calls of relevant OPs which may be available/relevant to implement measures of RDSP concerning the ecosystem for SEs
- Promotion campaign for the relevant calls targeting social enterprises (potential applicants/consortium partners)
- Preparation of the staff for the specific target group
 - Sensitizing
 - Knowledge transfer regarding social entrepreneurship, impact measurement and typical project implementation problems and risks of the target group
- Provision of consultancy to SEs regarding the application process
- Provision of consultancy to SEs regarding the implementation of the projects

Output(s)/Indicator(s):

- 1 sensitizing training for the staff of HBCG (5 participants)
- 1 knowledge transfer training for the staff of HBCG (5 participants)
- 1 promotion campaign
- 5 social enterprises receiving grants within the frameworks of the funding instruments serving the implementation of RDSP of HBC 2021-2027

Milestones per year

2022

- Preparation of the staff of HBCG
 - sensitizing
 - knowledge transfer
- Promotion campaign, road show (depending on the pandemic)

2023

- Consultancy (application process)
- Consultancy (project implementation)

2024

- Consultancy (application process)
- Consultancy (project implementation)

Key Actors:

- Hajdú-Bihar County Government
- Impact Hub Budapest (preparation, Bedő Beatrix)
- OFA National Employment Public-Benefit Non-profit Ltd. (consultancy, Dr. Nagy Anita)

Cost and funding sources:

- Staff cost of HBCG experts – 6800 EUR (HBCG regional sources)
- HR cost of external experts – 8500 EUR (project-based or HBCG regional source)
- Organisation cost of trainings – 850 EUR/training (project-based or HBCG regional source)
- Organisation cost of campaign – 3400 EUR (project-based or HBCG regional source)

Action 3 – Transnational cooperation

Hajdú-Bihar County Government will cooperate transnationally in the following ways:

- (1) Supporting adoption process of further tools from the toolbox in other countries (e.g. NEMO methodology in Hajdú-Bihar County)
- (2) Development of joint projects within the frameworks of transnational EU programs (e.g. Interreg Europe, Central Europe, Danube, Interreg CBC programs, Horizon Europe etc.)
- (3) Joint mapping and exploiting social entrepreneurship and social innovation development opportunities (e.g. training programs)
- (4) Mapping and exploiting transnational marketing opportunities for SEs (fairs, online marketplaces etc.)
- (5) Maintenance and extension of the DelFin Toolbox
- (6) Capitalization of DelFin achievements (e.g. integration into the services of Social Innovation Competence Centres)

D.T4.3.5 LOCAL ACTION PLAN DUGA RESA

Town of Duga Resa, Karlovac County,
Croatia

Final
02 2022



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Project name	Development of financial ecosystems for the promotion of social entrepreneurship in rural regions
Project index number and acronym	CE 1374 DelFin
Partner organisation/ partner number	Town of Duga Resa, PP5
Tandem project partner/ partner number	Brodoto Ltd. Zagreb, PP6
Country	Croatia
NUTS2 region	Pannonian Croatia
NUTS3 region	County of Karlovac
City/Municipality	Town of Duga Resa
Contact email address	grad-dugaresa@dugaresa.hr info@brodoto.com



INTRODUCTION

Based on the needs and challenges identified in the Analysis of Social Entrepreneurship (A.T1.1.4), lessons learned and recommendations from the Pilot Action (A.T2.5) and recommendations from Capacities Building Seminars for municipalities and financial institutions (A.T3.2.8 and A.T3.2.9), Croatian project partner Town of Duga Resa draw up Local Action Plan for Duga Resa and Karlovac County (D.T4.3.5) that contains description of concrete activities for the promotion of social entrepreneurship after project DelFin end with focus on sustainable use of the available tools. The action plan is based on common transnational concept that gives joint structure and guidelines for content and activities to be adopted by the partners according to their local and regional context.

PART ONE - OVERVIEW

1. Regional Challenges¹

According to the definition given by the “Strategy for the Development of Social Entrepreneurship in the Republic of Croatia for the period 2015-2020”, social enterprises are businesses based on the principles of social, environmental, and economic sustainability, in which generated profit or surplus is entirely or largely reinvested for the benefit of the community. The Strategy gives a definition of social entrepreneurship and a list of the criteria to be met by social enterprises which corresponds to the EU definition of the social enterprise. However, In Croatia there is no clear legal criteria what a social enterprise is, which results in no systematic, accurate and reliable data related to the social entrepreneurship sector. The Strategy for Social Entrepreneurship Development (Government of Croatia, 2015) stated that one of the first steps in its implementation will be the establishment of some sort of register or evidence list of social enterprises, which would be used as a source for eligibility for public funds. However, no register or list is established yet. The implementation of the Strategy failed to a large extent and many of its activities or goals (including the creation of the register of social enterprises) were not achieved in its five years of existence. Absence of substantial institutional support and unfinished legal revisions, announced by the Strategy, that would have created a more supportive environment for social enterprises in Croatia influenced various responses from the side of social enterprise actors. In many cases, this caused even more confusion and mess into the SE sector.

In recent years, some developments occurred in the SE development area. This was particularly the case with increased interest from academia, conducting research studies and creating new courses on social enterprises. Also, various other actors were included in development of trainings, educational material and curriculums. There are several new initiatives running in a business support sector and some new networks have been established making social enterprises more visible. Initiatives mostly come from private entities or non-profit organisations that produce market and non-market products and services and that are established with a social goal. However, our region still faces with the misunderstanding and issues such as:

¹ From AF: “European rural regions are currently facing several societal challenges, especially aging of population, brain drain and unemployment. Social innovation becomes more important to develop solutions to these problems and the promotion of social entrepreneurship (SE) is an important contribution to facilitate the economic transformation process especially in rural areas. Nevertheless, the traditional business support infrastructures and measures operated by regional or local authorities are not adapted to the special needs of social enterprises. There is a general lack of knowledge and understanding how social entrepreneurship evolves and works and how it can be efficiently promoted”.



(i) the concept of social entrepreneurship is interpreted in different ways through social enterprises, social innovation, and social capital; (ii) definition of social enterprise - the term and meaning are not sufficiently recognisable, and legal and institutional framework still does not recognize social enterprise as separate legal entity, which makes it difficult to determine a sample that meets the criteria defined by the Strategy for the Development Social Entrepreneurship in Croatia 2015-2020; (iii) lack of business knowledge and, in general, lack of impact measuring of the social enterprise - due to specific activity and triple bottom line, it is difficult to express the social and economic value, and (iv) poor development and networking of regional and local business support centers for social entrepreneurship. In regional context, there are only a few social enterprises in Karlovac County - the market is small and the critical mass is low, the local development agency that manages the incubator is a newly established agency and finding and hiring professional staff is a big challenge and closeness to the larger cities which offer more opportunities for growth and development, especially for young people.

2. DelFin activities - summary description of the key features

Social entrepreneurship, as a model for solving social, economic and environmental issues, plays a significant role in rural and suburban areas creating new job opportunities, social inclusion and sustainable development. *Analysis of Social Entrepreneurship in Karlovac County*, developed under the DelFin project, shows that social entrepreneurship is an important concept in creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the local and regional context. To unlock the potential and be able to create a more supportive environment for social enterprises in rural areas, the analysis proposes some measures for improvement of the current situation.

Project partners developed the *Toolbox* with aims to provide public institutions and financing institutions with practical information on how to support SE. It is an online compendium of financing and funding instruments targeting social enterprises and business support structures while respecting the special needs of social entrepreneurs. It especially supports local and regional public authorities, business support organizations, development agencies and financial institutions in developing and providing adequate economic and financial support possibilities, promoting cooperation/networking, improving business skills of social entrepreneurs, and meeting the needs of evaluation and monitoring.

Pilot phase in Karlovac County was focused on the implementation of selected instruments developed within the Toolbox to provide recommendations for the better support and promotion of social entrepreneurship in rural and disadvantaged areas. The pilot action demonstrated the possibility of adapting business support instruments from the Toolbox to promote SEs in Karlovac County, bearing in mind the existing local challenges, such as need for business and financing skills development of SE, weak capacity of stakeholders for providing SE support, unclear understanding of social enterprise among various stakeholders, lack of resources for social enterprises, etc.

The Croatian pilot had two objectives: (i) to increase the ability of key stakeholders to design, monitor and coordinate business and financial measures for better support and improve the skills of social entrepreneurs in rural areas, and (ii) to directly support social entrepreneurs in their specific development phase focusing on improving the financial ecosystem. All activities are implemented with the significant support of local and project partners and key stakeholders (local/regional authorities, regional chamber of commerce/craft, academic community). Pilot participants received a combined package of entrepreneurial skills development, tailor-made support, mentoring and networking opportunities with other actors from the SE sector. On the other hand, stakeholders get a better understanding of how social enterprise and ecosystem work, who are the drivers, and involvement of local BSS into the implementation.

The biggest lesson learnt from pilot stage as well as from *Capacity Building seminars* is that SEs and/ or potential SEs and other non-mainstream entrepreneurs also need non-financial support from BSOs and not only financial: sometimes financial support is pointless because SMEs or people with fewer business skills



lack the knowledge of how to use the funds available, how to create a business plan, why soft skills are important, what is pre-selling your brand, how to network, why communication plans are important, and similar. These should be incorporated into any financial package support offered by financial institutions and BSOs.

At the last regional stakeholder meeting, held on January 27, 2022, the project partners presented a draft action plan to the local and regional key stakeholders in order to engage them in the discussion and obtain recommendations for improvement. Stakeholders' recommendations for Action plan are included in the final document. Furthermore, they agreed this action plan can be the basis for wider action of key ecosystem stakeholders in terms of forming a working group or official body that will be responsible for detailed mapping and monitoring of social entrepreneurs at local level. For all enterprises identified as social enterprises, relevant body at local level should induce appropriate certificate or label to distinguish a social enterprise from traditional enterprises.

3. Policy context

Local action plan for Duga Resa addresses:

A. EU level:

- a) A new industrial strategy for Europe (2020): social economy is one of 14 industrial ecosystems.
- b) European Action Plan for the social economy (2021).
- c) ESF regulation: specific objective a) greater access to employment and activation measures for all jobseekers, especially young people, in particular through the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, for the long-term unemployment and disadvantaged groups in the labor market and for inactive people, as well as by promoting self-employment and the social economy.
- d) Mannheim Declaration on Social Economy, which identified the needs for strengthening the social economy.

B. National level:

- a) National Development Strategy 2030 - social entrepreneurship one of the areas that will be encouraged within SO5: Healthy, active and quality life (development direction 2. Strengthening resilience to crises).
- b) National Government Programme 2020-2024: General objective 1.1 preservation of jobs and social security; SO: encouraging work, employment.

C. Regional level:

- a) Karlovac County Development Plan for 2021-2027.

D. Local level:

- a) Official Implementation Program for Town of Duga Resa (2021-2026) - It is a strategic document that, in accordance with legal obligations (*Act on the System of Strategic Planning and Development Management of the Republic of Croatia*), is adopted during the mandate of the mayor for the period of four years. It defines key measures, activities and strategic projects for this period, which will raise the overall quality of life of all citizens of our town. The Town of Duga Resa with the mayor as the responsible person is responsible for its implementation, monitoring and reporting. A progress report on implementation of the Program is submitted to the representative or coordinating body twice a year. The Local Action Plan is part of the Implementation Program of the Town of Duga Resa for the period 2021-2025.



4. Objectives and priorities

There is a growing need for diversifying available sources of finance for social entrepreneurs, enabling larger volumes of funding than until now is needed. The largest portion of funds is needed in the incubation phase of the company development cycle, and that must be secured. On the other hand, poor visibility of social entrepreneurship must be tackled from the institutional level as well, creating programs and support schemes in order to present SE in the right manner, especially in terms of benefits for local communities. This can be reinforced by systemic monitoring of social entrepreneurs. Finally, mentoring and education programs are needed for elevating the obstacle of insufficient knowledge and expertise on management and entrepreneurship among social entrepreneurs themselves and empower them to actively search for sources of funding and visibility. What is critically missing is the space intended for beginner entrepreneurs with accompanying infrastructure to assist them in the incubation process at the beginning of their business when they need it most.

Based on the experiences that we gained, lessons learned, needs and recommendations collected from different actors of social entrepreneurship ecosystem in our region, with this action plan we want to encourage further collaboration with community to ensure appropriate measures for promotion social entrepreneurship in rural region, especially to:

- (i) improve access to the labour market - employment and self-employment through social entrepreneurship,
- (ii) improve and modernise entrepreneurial skills of people in rural area,
- (iii) support the development of business infrastructure and build a coworking community.

Thus, our objectives are:

- 1) Improved access to the labour market for unemployed and inactive people, especially young people, women, and vulnerable groups by developing and improving existing forms of business for 10 social entrepreneurs and / or start-ups with social innovation and impact in Duga Resa and Karlovac County by 2024.
- 2) At least 20 different actors, including public authorities, private sector and business support structures participating in social entrepreneurship outreach.

The action plan is divided into three parts:

- 1) Business support, in which we want to encourage the creation and development of social entrepreneurship through the business incubator and coworking space.
- 2) Funding instruments, through which we want to provide financial support to companies that are primarily in the incubation phase.
- 3) Transnational cooperation, through which we want to promote the toolbox and its application as a synthesis of key information on available frameworks, good practices and tools to improve support for the development and promotion of social entrepreneurship (practices, tools and mechanisms for planning, development, implementation and monitoring).

This will be achieved through three main activities by:

- (i) Offering physical space and tailor-made support for new and growing business (incubation programme is built on DelFin result and pilot experience).
- (ii) Providing funding for social enterprises and enterprises with social impact: Program of the Town of Duga Resa for financing social entrepreneurial projects - a program that provides funding to community businesses to address local social needs.



- (iii) Advising and informing entrepreneurs regarding the preparation and implementation of projects financed from Operational Programme Effective Human Resources 2021-2027 (OPULJP 2021-2027) and ESF+, and from Local Action Groups (Rural Development Program).

PART TWO - ACTIONS

Action 1: Business Support

Activity 1.1. *Encourage creation and development of the social entrepreneurship through business incubator and coworking space (*The incubation program for social entrepreneurs was implemented within the pilot phase of the DelFin project. The program will continue as a regular activity through the incubator and coworking supports in Duga Resa).*

Within this activity, partners will provide a combined package of a work environment with expert support. Coworking space will serve as a platform for knowledge sharing, networking, fostering collaboration, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Most of the activities will be carried out by the Local Development Agency, which also manages the local incubator. The Agency will provide expert business support (internal and external), while the Town of Duga Resa will provide the funds needed for the lease of coworking space and for the cost of maintaining equipment and infrastructure. An important partner in the implementation is the Karlovac University of Applied Sciences, which will inform current and future students about the importance and significance of social entrepreneurship, and employment opportunities through social entrepreneurship. They will also promote a new course on social entrepreneurship in their curriculum. Some specific tasks include:

- Public call for expression of interest for the use of coworking space
- Provide business incubator services and mentoring programmes developed under DelFin pilot project:
 - a) development of a plan for consulting and education
 - b) development of an initial business plan for entrepreneurs
 - c) mentoring of incubator tenants and individual business consulting - offering a program for business & financial skill development built on DelFin pilot experience and recommendations
- Organising Networking activities:
 - a) Business Meet ups with guests from the financial sector, academia, other SEs and relevant ecosystem representatives.
 - b) Organise social business pitch events.
- Regular management and maintenance of incubator and coworking space
- Publish a newsletter with information and news about co-workers and the activities organised in the space
- Promotion of the DelFin Toolbox via website and newsletter
- When is needed and in coordination with DelFin partners, updating/refreshing the Toolbox
- Promoting employment and self-employment through social entrepreneurship through the Office for Career Counselling of the Karlovac University of Applied Sciences
- Technical and organisational support to entrepreneurs - facility supervision, development of schedules for the use of common areas, care for the safety of the premises
- Conducting a satisfaction analysis of the services provided

Output(s)/Indicator(s):

- At least 10 tenants - SE / start-up users (Lease of Office Space Agreement/Contract for a period of three years)



- No of thematic workshop provided to the SE/start up in regard business development
- No of business plan developed (10)
- No of info-days held by Office for Career Counselling (3)
- 3 satisfaction analysis of the services provided (1 per year; at least 20% better working environment per year; satisfaction of tenants with services provided - min. 4 (range from 1-5))
- 6 newsletter (2 per year)
- 3 promotional events (seminars, conferences, and different events about social entrepreneurship)
- No of updates of the Toolbox

Milestones per year:

2022:

- Preparatory and administrative activities for open call:
 - a) preparation of documentation for the open call,
 - b) evaluation of received applications,
 - c) selection of future incubator tenants and
 - b) preparation of contracts with tenants.
- Contract signing - Offer venue and mentorship for startups
- Provide support in idea designing, testing and validation and concept creation (trainings, educations, expertise support)
- Promotional event (1 per year) - Review of the Toolbox and promotion of the tools to the wider audience
- 1st update of the **support4SE.eu** in close coordination and collaboration with DelFin partners (the owner of the toolbox platform)
- Linking the toolbox platform to the official web site of the incubator
- Networking events (1 per semester)
- Newsletter preparation and releases (2 per year)
- 1st students' info-day
- 1st satisfaction survey (questionnaire)

2023:

- continuous support to tenants (development of the social business model, mentoring, advice services, workshops)
- 2nd update of the **support4SE.eu** in close coordination and collaboration with DelFin partners (the owner of the toolbox platform)
- Networking events
- Newsletter preparation and releases
- 2nd students' info-day
- 2nd satisfaction survey (questionnaire)

2024:

- Organization of presentation of social business models of the tenants
- 3rd update of the **support4SE.eu** in close coordination and collaboration with DelFin partners (the owner of the toolbox platform)
- Networking events
- Newsletter preparation and releases
- 3rd students' info-day
- 3rd satisfaction survey (questionnaire)
- Preparation for a new acquisition of incubator and coworking space tenants



Key Actors involved: Local development agency INOVADR, Town of Duga Resa, Public Open University in Duga Resa (POUDR), Karlovac County, Karlovac University of Applied Sciences, SMEs, BSS, High School in Duga Resa.

Cost and funding sources:

- Special funding programs through national Operational Funds and EU funds
- Town of Duga Resa - incubator & co-working space (approx. 50.000 EUR per year)

Action 2: Funding instruments

Activity 2.1. Launch of the Open Call / Program of the City of Duga Resa for financing social entrepreneurial projects with emphasis on local needs.

Analysis of local needs and characteristics - access to business finance cannot work effectively when operating in isolation. It needs to be a part of an integrated support package which includes needs analysis, guidance and support. Partners will work together to find a way to map social entrepreneurs in Karlovac County and identify local needs. The town of Duga Resa will pay special attention for preparation and launching of the funding program, that among others include:

- defining the content of the call taking into account the lessons learned and recommendations of the DeFin project, the type and amount of funding, target groups, eligibility criteria, content of the application, to establish criteria for evaluation and other relevant documentation for submitting the application
- Insure funds in the city budget for the Program for 2023-2024
- Promotion campaign of the programme
- Provision of consultancy to potential users by Local development agency in terms of application process
- Announcing open calls and selecting the SEs according to established criteria (selection process)
- Signing the contract and monitoring its implementation

Output(s)/Indicator(s):

- No of signed contracts

Milestones per year:

2022:

- preparatory and administrative activities
- target group identification/mapping
- determining the content of the tender and evaluation criteria
- organization of info days for potential users

2023:

- publishing a call - 1st call
- Info days
- Advisory services in the call application process
- Selection process
- Contract signing and its implementation

2024:

- publishing a call - 2nd call
- Info days
- Advisory services in the call application process



- Selection process
- Contract signing and its implementation

Key Actors involved: Town of Duga Resa, Local development agency INOVADR, Local action Groups, Karlovac County

Cost and funding sources:

- Cost: 50.000 EUR
- Source: Town of Duga Resa

Activity 2.2. Promotion of Operational Programme Effective Human Resources 2021-202 (OPULJP 2021-2027) /ESF+ and LAG Vallis Colapis. LAG Petrova Gora and LAG Frankopan open calls for investments in social enterprises (Rural Development Program).

Submission of project proposals to tenders co-financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds, as well as national programs and tenders. Activities also include advising social entrepreneurs on entrepreneurship development programs. The Town of Duga Resa and the Local Development Agency will prepare and advise in the preparation of project proposals in the modelling phase of the investment and after the launching of public calls / tenders, prepare documentation in accordance with defined parameters and conditions of the tender / public calls. It is also planned to submit project proposals for tenders co-financed from the Rural Development Program and local action groups in Karlovac County (LAG Vallis Colapis, LAG Petrova Gora, LAG Frankopan) and tenders of Karlovac County. After the approval of the project, the Local Development Agency will provide consulting services on project implementation, monitoring the implementation of activities and all contractual obligations. Procurement procedures will be carried out for clients and project progress reports and other necessary documentation will be prepared, in accordance with the defined tender / call parameters and relevant implementation documents. Some tasks will include:

- Promotions of programs and calls aimed at strengthening the capacity of social entrepreneurs
- Organisation of workshops on project preparation and implementation for the target group
- Administrative support to social entrepreneurs in the project application process
- Support in project implementation
- Support to social enterprise development and promotion:
- Capacity building and development of entrepreneurial skills (thematic workshops for SEs)
- Networking & Communication - events where various SE stakeholders meet up; implementing communication activities aimed at raising visibility for target group

Output(s)/Indicator(s):

- No of signed contracts/ No of SEs business proposals developed and implemented
- No of workshops
- No of networking/promotion events

Milestones per year

2022:

- monitoring of calls from the operational program at the national level
- monitoring of calls from the LAG at the local/regional level
- Info days for potential SE beneficiaries
- Conducting thematic workshop for SEs - Bskill & Fskill development
- Advisory in application process
- Advisory in implementation

2023:

- monitoring of calls from the operational program at the national level



- monitoring of calls from the LAG at the local/regional level
- Info days for potential SE beneficiaries
- Conducting thematic workshop for SEs - Bskill & Fskill development
- Advisory in application process
- Advisory in implementation
- Networking

2024:

- monitoring of calls from the operational program at the national level
- Info days for potential SE beneficiaries
- Conducting thematic workshop for SEs - Bskill & Fskill development
- Advisory in application process
- Advisory in implementation
- Networking

Key Actors: Town of Duga Resa, Local Development Agency INOVADR

Cost estimation possible after announcement of the first calls from the OPULJP 2021-2027 ESF+ and LAGs (both expected in the 2nd semester of 2022, after which the action plan will be updated)

Source:

- Operational Programme Effective Human Resources 2021-2027 (OPULJP) - funded by the European Social Fund +
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)
- Regional funds for entrepreneurial and rural development

Action 3: Transnational cooperation

Partners will cooperate transnationally in the following ways:

- 1) Present the key project outputs/ deliverables at the final dissemination event of the Interreg Central Europe, CE RESPONSIBLE project (LP: E-Institute/ Institute for Comprehensive Development Solutions; Ptuj, Slovenia), taking place in mid-March 2022.

Indicators:

- number of Interreg partner institutions informed about DelFin key results: 11.
- DelFin Toolbox shared on the CE Responsible platform connecting social with altruistic entrepreneurs.

- 2) Present the toolkit and other relevant project results during project implementation of the Erasmus+ Adult Education stream project that PP6 Brodoto will be implementing with Social Business Hub Styria (Austria) if the Project will be awarded with funding during the course of 2022. The project aims at supporting SE entrepreneurs in Styria and Croatia.

(If the Project is awarded funding): Indicator: key DelFin outputs presented to at least 12 representatives of Austrian and Croatian start-ups; as well as staff of the partner organisation on the partnership.

- 3) Present the toolkit to the Croatian working group of social and ecological impact BSOs working on Croatia's accession to the Global Steering Group for Social Investment. Some of the working group members are partners in other Interreg projects, such as Finance4SocialChange, a project giving support to economy that inspires positive social change in the Danube Region. The working group meets monthly and PP6 Brodoto is a member.

Indicator: key DelFin outputs presented to the group members; representatives of at least eight Croatian BSOs; higher education or state institutions.



PART THREE - COMMITMENT TO ADOPT THE ACTION PLAN

<p>Town of Duga Resa - preparation and launch calls for financing social entrepreneurial projects with emphasis on local needs; support in project implementation - facilitation in administrative/ bureaucracy process/procedures; project partnership with NGOs and other relevant actors in different projects on social development funded by EU.</p>	<p>Strategy and an action plan will be adopted into Official Implementation Program of the Town of Duga Resa, that will be adopted by the mayor for respective mandate period of 4 years (mayor as a competent decision-making body for adoption of this Development plan by the national rules and thus formalised and verifiable).</p>
<p>Local Development Agency INOVADR - new established agency, incubation program, providing coworking space, administrative support, assistance in drafting project applications and project implementation, advisory services for SEs, training, and mentoring program, organize and implement various networking and business events.</p>	<p>Local development agency INOVA DR will adjust the action plan to its action plan and program and will be verified by the agency's Steering Committee/ or director.</p>
<p>Karlovac University of Applied Sciences - project partnership with NGOs and other relevant actors in different project on social development funded by EU; expertise support; training and workshops for SEs and students, provide know-how solutions.</p>	<p>Karlovac University of Applied Sciences will contribute to the implementation of the action plan and will be verified by the responsible person.</p>
<p>LAG Vallis Colapis - advisory services, information services and assistance in drafting project applications and project implementation, but for subjects in the field of agriculture, rural tourism etc. grant support (EAFRD); exchange of good practices; networking, impact measurement.</p>	
<p>LAG Petrova Gora - advisory services, information services and assistance in drafting project applications and project implementation, but for subjects in the field of agriculture, rural tourism etc. grant support (EAFRD); exchange of good practices; networking, impact measurement.</p>	<p>The Local Development Strategy (LDS) is a fundamental document of the LAG's activities, verified by respective Ministry. Action plan will keep track of Measures in the LDS.</p>
<p>LAG Frankopan - advisory services, information services and assistance in drafting project applications and project implementation, but for subjects in the field of agriculture, rural tourism etc. grant support (EAFRD); exchange of good practices; networking, impact measurement.</p>	
<p>BODOTO Ltd - will be involved mostly in transnational cooperation activity and provide expert support on social entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>Local action plan will be verified by the agency's director.</p>

Piemonte (IT) Action Plan

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<p>PART 2 – Actions Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action 1: promote the networking and coordination among the relevant players of the ecosystem, in the development of new support measures for social entrepreneurship and related funding instruments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities to be implemented - Outputs/Indicators - Milestones per year - Key Actors to be involved - Cost and funding sources ▪ Action 2: transnational cooperation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities to be implemented - Outputs/Indicators - Milestones per year - Key Actors to be involved - Cost and funding sources 	<p>PARTE 2 – Sviluppo delle azioni</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Azione 1: promuovere il networking e il coordinamento fra i diversi attori dell'ecosistema, nello sviluppo di nuove misure di sostegno all'imprenditorialità sociale e relativi strumenti di finanziamento <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attività da realizzare - Risultati attesi/Indicatori - Passi intermedi - Attori chiave da coinvolgere - Copertura dei costi ▪ Azione 2: cooperazione transnazionale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attività da realizzare - Risultati attesi/Indicatori - Passi intermedi - Attori chiave da coinvolgere - Copertura dei costi
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PART 1 – OVERVIEW	PARTE 1 – PANORAMICA INTRODUTTIVA
Regional challenges	Sfide regionali
<p>In the rural areas of our region, the main challenges that social entrepreneurs could address are related to:</p> <p>(1) DEPOPULATION: need to enable (young) people to live and work in inner areas. Intense outmigration and a brain drain of young, high-skilled residents, who move to urban areas to find better jobs and easier access to public services. As a result, the population structure is elder than the other territories of Piedmont.</p> <p>(2) LACK OF SERVICES: lower population density (together with lower incomes and a related lower ability to spend in consumption and investments) contributes to a lack of the “critical mass” that is necessary to sustain the same level of services and institutions found around urban areas. As a result, public and private activities such as schools, transportation, trades, or medical practices tend to close, triggering a negative circle that reduces the ability of these regions to remain attractive and to sustain a socio-economic growth.</p> <p>(3) NEED TO INCREASE COLLABORATIVE PATTERNS at very local level, as to join the efforts to respond to challenges and needs. The growth of collaboration networks should be supported and favoured, such as cooperative communities and similar.</p> <p>To address these challenges, social entrepreneurship in rural areas should be supported since it could contribute to improve the local socio-economic conditions. For example, social enterprises could deliver services and provide common goods that otherwise would not be granted by neither the state nor the market. In this way, social enterprises could contribute to ensuring an adequate system of services to local communities that also contrasts depopulation trends.</p>	<p>Nelle aree rurali della nostra regione, le principali sfide verso cui si potrebbero indirizzare gli imprenditori sociali sono legate a:</p> <p>(1) SPOPOLAMENTO: necessità di consentire (soprattutto ai giovani) di vivere e lavorare nelle aree interne. Emigrazione intensa e fuga di cervelli di residenti giovani e altamente qualificati, che si trasferiscono nelle aree urbane per trovare posti di lavoro migliori e un accesso più facile ai servizi pubblici. Di conseguenza, la struttura della popolazione è più anziana rispetto agli altri territori del Piemonte.</p> <p>(2) MANCANZA DI SERVIZI: la minore densità di popolazione (unita a redditi più bassi e ad una relativa minore capacità di spesa in consumi e investimenti) contribuisce alla mancanza della “massa critica” necessaria per sostenere lo stesso livello di servizi e istituzioni riscontrate intorno alle aree urbane. Di conseguenza, le attività pubbliche e private come le scuole, i trasporti, i commerci o gli studi medici tendono a chiudersi, innescando un circolo negativo che riduce la capacità di queste regioni di rimanere attraenti e di sostenere una crescita socioeconomica.</p> <p>(3) NECESSITÀ DI SOSTENERE I MODELLI COLLABORATIVI a livello molto locale, in modo da unire gli sforzi per rispondere alle sfide e ai bisogni. Va sostenuta e favorita la crescita di reti di collaborazione, come cooperative di comunità e simili.</p> <p>L'imprenditoria sociale nelle zone rurali dovrebbe essere sostenuta poiché potrebbe contribuire ad affrontare queste sfide e a migliorare le condizioni socioeconomiche locali.</p> <p>Ad esempio, le imprese sociali potrebbero erogare servizi comuni e fornire beni che altrimenti non sarebbero resi disponibili né dallo Stato, né dal mercato. In questo modo le imprese sociali potrebbero contribuire a garantire un adeguato sistema di</p>

In addition, social enterprises can train and educate people, thus contributing to create job opportunities for young generations and to increase the stock of knowledge and skills available in local labour markets, also potentially attracting talent from other geographical areas and motivating young emigrated people to return.

Based on these challenges we designed the DelFin pilot project call in Piedmont, that was addressed both to:

- organizations already active and formally constituted, which wished to expand or innovate their scope of action through new interventions aimed at responding to the social needs of the rural and mountain areas,

AND

- potential future entrepreneurs (subjects individuals or groups) who, even if not legally constituted, had a project idea aimed at generating a positive social impact on rural and mountain areas.

The selection criteria were based on parameters related to the objective of developing new business ideas to respond to the social challenges of rural and mountain communities, as well as to the innovativeness for the local context (in terms of offering new solutions to address the problems of the local communities).

55 applications were received.

On the basis of criteria such as correspondence to territorial needs and local roots, entrepreneurial character, feasibility and sustainability, level of innovation, we selected the 10 projects that we expected could most likely benefit from the incubation programme, to be turned into a concrete entrepreneurial action with a widespread social impact on the territory.

We have identified, for example, projects that originated from collaboration networks that were already deeply rooted in the area, or that proposed initiatives with a strong entrepreneurial character, which could be implemented with short / medium-term timing and which did not require heavy initial structural investments.

servizi alle comunità locali, contribuendo a contrastare anche la tendenza allo spopolamento.

Inoltre, le imprese sociali possono contribuire a formare ed educare le persone, e dunque a creare opportunità di lavoro per le giovani generazioni: potrebbero contribuire ad aumentare il livello di conoscenza e competenza disponibili nei mercati del lavoro locali, attraendo potenzialmente anche talenti da altre aree geografiche e motivando i giovani emigrati al ritorno.

Sulla base di queste sfide abbiamo progettato il bando del progetto pilota DelFin in Piemonte, che si è rivolto a:

- organizzazioni già attive e formalmente costituite, che volessero ampliare o innovare il proprio raggio d'azione attraverso nuovi interventi volti a rispondere ai bisogni sociali delle aree rurali e montane,

E

- potenziali futuri imprenditori (soggetti singoli o gruppi) che, anche se non legalmente costituiti, avessero un'idea progettuale finalizzata a generare un impatto sociale positivo sulle aree rurali e montane.

I criteri di selezione dei candidati si sono basati su parametri legati all'obiettivo di sviluppare nuove idee imprenditoriali per rispondere alle sfide sociali delle comunità rurali e montane, nonché all'innovatività per il contesto locale (in termini di offerta di nuove soluzioni per affrontare i problemi delle comunità locali).

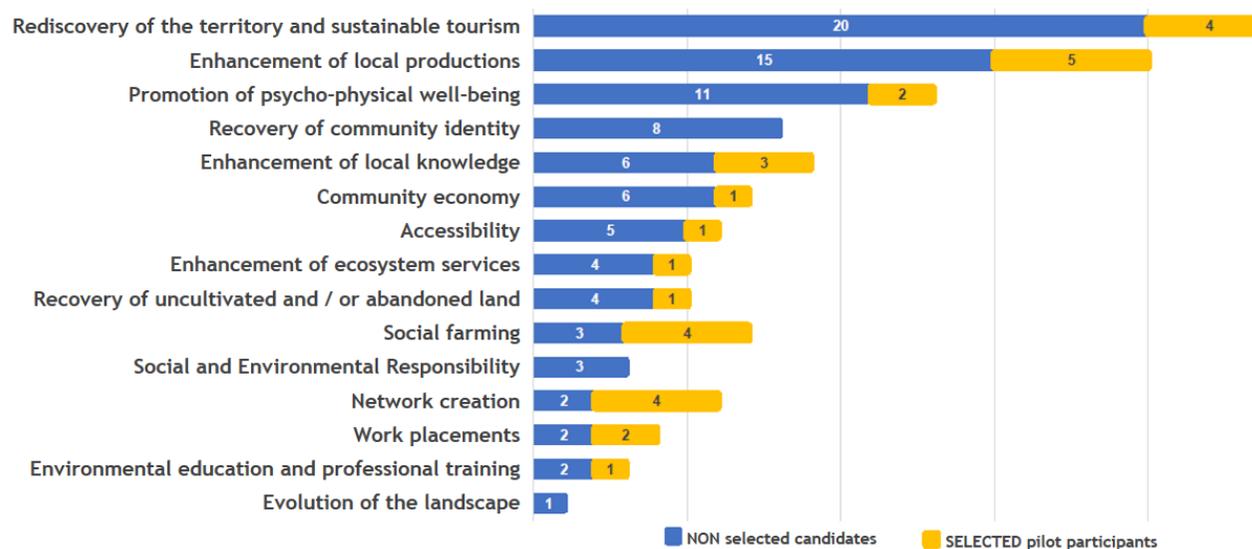
Sono pervenute 55 domande.

Sulla base di criteri quali rispondenza alle esigenze territoriali e al radicamento locale, carattere imprenditoriale, fattibilità e sostenibilità, livello di innovazione, abbiamo selezionato i 10 progetti che ci aspettavamo potessero beneficiare maggiormente dal programma di incubazione, per trasformare la loro idea in una concreta realtà imprenditoriale con un impatto sociale diffuso sul territorio.

Abbiamo individuato, ad esempio, progetti che nascessero da reti di collaborazione già radicate sul territorio, o che proponessero iniziative dal forte carattere imprenditoriale, realizzabili con tempistiche di breve/medio periodo e che non richiedessero pesanti investimenti strutturali di partenza.

The table below shows the thematic focus of the 55 applications received and of the 10 selected participants, which demonstrates the strong mission of generating positive social impact on local communities pursued by the projects.

La tabella seguente mostra il focus tematico delle 55 candidature ricevute e dei 10 partecipanti selezionati, a dimostrazione della forte missione di generare impatto sociale positivo sulle comunità locali perseguita dai progetti.



The projects are still progressing in their development and consolidation path and they are kept monitored.

To date we can say that 2 new jobs have been created in rural areas, and in the near future the incubated projects plan to further increase the job opportunities at the local community level.

Furthermore, thanks to the DelFin project, 45 local players (public administrations and financial organizations) were trained on the topics of "supporting social enterprises in rural area".

I progetti stanno ancora procedendo nel loro percorso di sviluppo e consolidamento e sono monitorati.

Ad oggi possiamo dire che sono stati creati 2 nuovi posti di lavoro nelle aree rurali, e nel prossimo futuro i progetti incubati prevedono di aumentare ulteriormente le opportunità di lavoro a livello di comunità locale.

Inoltre, grazie al progetto DelFin, sono stati formati 45 attori locali (pubbliche amministrazioni ed enti finanziari) sui temi del "sostegno alle imprese sociali in aree rurali".

Objectives of the DelFin tandem partners	Obiettivi dei partner piemontesi di DelFin
<p>Thanks to the lessons learned so far in the implementation of the DelFin project, we see the need to consolidate the collaboration process among the players of the regional/local ecosystem that support social entrepreneurship and to further exploit the hints provided by the DelFinToolbox.</p> <p>For this reason and with the purpose of further supporting the development of social entrepreneurship in Piedmont rural areas, also with the application of the DelFin Toolbox, our goal will be play an active role in stimulating a better coordination among the actors of the ecosystem.</p> <p>In the DelFin project, we have developed a constant and active exchange with many stakeholders, and the DelFin Toolbox has been widely presented and disseminated.</p> <p>In such activity we have realised that Piedmont has nourished panorama of players who support the development of rural/mountain areas and started to deal with support actions concerning social enterprises: we are talking about policy makers ad different level, public and private financing organisations, incubation and capacity building providers, philanthropic organisations, etc.</p> <p>So, for instance we can mention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the consolidate program “Grand up” launched and granted by Bank Foundation of Cuneo (CRC) and implemented by the accelerator SocialFare; - the call launched from the newborn (2019) Time2 Foundation; - the tailored services performed by Banca Etica and some local financing organisations to facilitate access to micro-credit for social enterprises <p>AND ALSO, even if less expressly addressed to social enterprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the accompanying service for participation in local/regional calls managed by the Local Action Groups active in different inner areas 	<p>Grazie alle lezioni finora apprese nell'attuazione del progetto DelFin, si avverte la necessità di consolidare il processo di collaborazione tra gli attori dell'ecosistema regionale/locale che sostengono l'imprenditoria sociale e di sfruttare ulteriormente gli spunti offerti dal Toolbox DelFin.</p> <p>Per questo motivo e con l'obiettivo di sostenere ulteriormente lo sviluppo dell'imprenditoria sociale nelle aree rurali piemontesi, anche con l'applicazione del Toolbox DelFin, il nostro obiettivo sarà quello di svolgere un ruolo attivo nello stimolare un migliore coordinamento tra gli attori dell'ecosistema.</p> <p>Nel progetto DelFin abbiamo sviluppato uno scambio costante e attivo con molti stakeholder e lo stesso Toolbox DelFin è stato ampiamente disseminato e presentato.</p> <p>Nello svolgimento di questa attività ci siamo resi conto che il Piemonte ha nutrito un panorama di attori che sostengono lo sviluppo delle aree rurali/montane e che hanno iniziato ad occuparsi di azioni di sostegno alle imprese sociali: si tratta di policy maker di diverso livello, finanziatori pubblici e privati, incubatori e fornitori si programmi di accompagnamento e capacity building, organizzazioni filantropiche, ecc.</p> <p>Così, ad esempio, possiamo citare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - il programma ormai consolidato “Grand up”, promosso da Fondazione CRC di Cuneo e realizzato dall'acceleratore SocialFare; - il bando promosso dalla nuova (2019) Fondazione Time2; - i servizi personalizzati svolti da Banca Etica e da alcuni finanziatori locali per facilitare l'accesso al microcredito per le imprese sociali. <p>E INOLTRE, anche se meno espressamente rivolto alle imprese sociali:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - i bandi locali/regionali gestiti dai Gruppi di Azione Locale attivi nelle diverse aree interne;

- the national policy for the development of inner areas, that strongly impacts also on Piedmont rural/mountain territories and that is expected to set-up local development funding programmes

However, despite the fact (very positive and encouraging) that in the last years actions supporting social enterprises have increased, we still notice that there is a lot of fragmentation and sometimes overlap between the different support actions, and this demonstrates that the regional ecosystem lacks of coordination, of a common vision and of a shared strategy. Furthermore, it can be very useful to get more inspiration from the type of interventions collected in the DelFin Toolbox, in order to have a more differentiated set of local actions.

Interventions designed and planned in a coordinated and interrelated way would allow to generate a greater impact, optimize the available resources, create synergies, avoid overlapping (in timing and targets) and fill the gaps by applying different tools to different needs.

Remarkable added value could derive, for instance, from a coordination among the activities/programmes already in place and services/resources already activated to support social enterprises. At this regard, the Piedmont Region as regional policy maker and ESF Managing Authority should also be involved as key players.

In this framework, the DelFin Toolbox can be a useful instrument for the design of new and improved support actions for the development of social entrepreneurship.

The experience that we gained in the DelFin pilot project was indeed based on an open and inclusive approach towards stakeholders throughout the whole process: from the design of the action, to call management and scouting of ideas, to the incubation program deployment.

- We widely shared the set-up and content of the Toolbox, and we also collected tools/content from some local stakeholders;

- la politica nazionale per lo sviluppo delle aree interne, che impatta fortemente anche sui territori rurali/montani piemontesi e che prevede la realizzazione di programmi di finanziamento a sostegno dello sviluppo locale.

Tuttavia, nonostante il fatto (molto positivo e incoraggiante) che negli ultimi anni siano aumentate le azioni a sostegno delle imprese sociali, si nota ancora molta frammentazione e talvolta sovrapposizione tra le diverse azioni di sostegno, e questo dimostra che l'ecosistema regionale è carente di coordinamento, di una visione comune e di una strategia condivisa. Può inoltre risultare molto utile trarre maggiore ispirazione dalle varie tipologie di intervento raccolte nel DelFin Toolbox, per differenziare le azioni locali.

Interventi progettati e pianificati in maniera coordinata e interconnessa permetterebbero di generare un maggiore impatto, ottimizzare le risorse disponibili, creare sinergie, evitare sovrapposizioni (nei tempi e negli obiettivi) e colmare le lacune applicando strumenti diversi alle diverse esigenze.

Un notevole valore aggiunto potrebbe derivare, ad esempio, già da un coordinamento tra le attività/programmi attualmente in atto e i servizi/risorse attualmente programmati a sostegno delle imprese sociali. A questo proposito, dovrebbe essere coinvolta come attore chiave anche la Regione Piemonte, in qualità di policy maker regionale e Autorità di Gestione del FSE.

Il Toolbox DelFin in questo contesto potrà rappresentare un utile strumento per progettare nuovi e migliorati interventi a supporto dello sviluppo dell'imprenditorialità sociale.

L'esperienza che abbiamo acquisito nel progetto pilota DelFin si è basata a tutti gli effetti su un approccio inclusivo e aperto agli stakeholder durante l'intero processo: dalla progettazione dell'azione, alla gestione del bando, allo scouting di idee/candidatura, all'attuazione del programma di incubazione.

- Abbiamo ampiamente condiviso impostazione e contenuti del Toolbox, raccogliendo anche contributi attivi dagli stakeholder locali;

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- we developed regular consultations with other players of the system to share strategic decisions;
- we ensured constant and open visibility to all progresses and results of the incubation program;
- we worked to activate bilateral contacts with various ecosystem players functional to the success of the program and its participants.
- We also involved third parties of the ecosystem for the development of some technical activities of the pilot programme, in order to join the competencies into a shared action (Collegio Carlo Alberto for the scouting activities; SAA business school administration for the incubation program; NEMO-Nuova Economia in MONTagna for the networking activities).

We think this experience could be seen as a first humble experiment on how to tackle complexity and promote a systemic change, with the final shared aim to support the birth and growth of social enterprises.

Now we think that the players of the ecosystem in Piedmont need to be encouraged and stimulated to work in cross-collaboration, with the aim of better interrelating the set of new and improved tools and services that will be implemented and the allocation of private/public funding. A shared strategy on defining the pre-incubation, incubation, and financing tools that need to be activated or increased in support to all the life cycle of social enterprises, would be extremely beneficial. In this framework, the Toolbox developed in DelFin will find further application.

Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intend to play an active role in promoting this new approach.

- abbiamo sviluppato consultazioni periodiche con gli altri attori del sistema per condividere decisioni strategiche;
- abbiamo assicurato una visibilità costante e aperta a tutti dei progressi e risultati del programma di incubazione;
- abbiamo lavorato per attivare contatti bilaterali con diversi attori dell'ecosistema funzionali al successo del programma e dei progetti partecipanti.
- Abbiamo inoltre coinvolto terze parti dell'ecosistema per lo sviluppo di alcune attività tecniche all'interno del programma pilota, al fine di unire le competenze in un'azione condivisa (Collegio Carlo Alberto per le attività di scouting; SAA School of Management per il programma di incubazione; NEMO-Nuova Economia in Montagna per le attività di networking).

Pensiamo che questa esperienza possa essere vista come un primo umile esperimento su come affrontare la complessità e promuovere un cambiamento di sistema, con l'obiettivo finale condiviso di sostenere la nascita e la crescita delle imprese sociali.

Ora pensiamo che gli attori dell'ecosistema piemontese debbano essere incoraggiati e stimolati a lavorare in una collaborazione trasversale, con l'obiettivo di interrelare meglio l'insieme di strumenti e servizi, nuovi o migliorati, che verranno implementati e l'assegnazione di finanziamenti pubblici/privati. Sarebbe estremamente utile una strategia condivisa sulla definizione degli strumenti di pre-incubazione, incubazione e finanziamento da attivare o incrementare a supporto di tutto il ciclo di vita delle imprese sociali. In questo quadro, il Toolbox sviluppato in DelFin troverà ulteriore applicazione.

Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intendono svolgere un ruolo attivo nella promozione di questo nuovo approccio.

Proposed Actions	Azioni proposte
<p>Action 1: promote the networking and coordination among the relevant players of the ecosystem, for the development of new/improved support measures for social entrepreneurship and related funding instruments.</p>	<p>Azione 1: promuovere il networking e il coordinamento fra i diversi attori dell'ecosistema, per lo sviluppo di nuove/migliorate misure di sostegno all'imprenditorialità sociale e relativi strumenti di finanziamento.</p>
<p>Within the regional ecosystem, Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intend to play an active role in stimulating networking and coordination among different public/private players, in order to favour the co-programming of new support measures and new funding instruments addressed to the birth and growth of social enterprises. In this framework, the Toolbox developed in DelFin will be a working tool and it may find further application.</p> <p>With this purpose, we will create new opportunities for networking, exchange of knowledge and mutual learning, in order to encourage the set-up of a multi-funding and multi-level governance approach to support projects with social impact in rural/mountain areas.</p> <p>The result expected is that at least one new funding measure/support intervention will be launched, based on an ecosystem multi-players approach.</p> <p>In order to verify the success of Action 1, we intend to verify the following KPIs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - n. of stakeholders involved in this action plan process (minimum 5) - n. of new funding measures/support interventions, based on an ecosystem multi-players approach and on the application of the DelFin Toolbox. 	<p>All'interno dell'ecosistema regionale, Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intendono svolgere un ruolo attivo nello stimolare la condivisione e il coordinamento tra diversi attori pubblico/privati, al fine di favorire la co-programmazione di nuove misure di sostegno e nuovi strumenti di finanziamento rivolti alla nascita e alla crescita delle imprese sociali. In questo quadro, il Toolbox sviluppato in DelFin sarà uno strumento di lavoro e potrà trovare ulteriore applicazione.</p> <p>A tal fine intendiamo creare nuove opportunità di networking, scambio di conoscenze e apprendimento reciproco, al fine di incoraggiare l'impostazione di un approccio di governance multi-finanziamento e multi-livello per supportare progetti con impatto sociale nelle aree rurali/montane.</p> <p>Il risultato atteso è l'avvio di almeno una nuova misura di finanziamento/intervento di sostegno, basata su un approccio multi-player ecosistemico.</p> <p>Al fine di verificare il successo dell'Azione 1, intendiamo verificare i seguenti indicatori (KPI):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - n. delle parti interessate coinvolte nell'attuazione di questo piano d'azione (minimo 5) - n. di nuove misure di finanziamento/intervento di sostegno, basate su un approccio multi-attore ecosistemico e sull'applicazione del Toolbox DelFin.

Action 2: transnational cooperation	Azione 2: cooperazione transnazionale
<p>Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini believe that transnational collaboration activities, including in the framework of new projects on these issues, should be strengthened.</p> <p>Multiple activities are envisaged be developed for that purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intend to search for new opportunities for transnational cooperation for the set-up of new EU/interreg projects related to rural/mountain areas and impact-oriented enterprises (taking into consideration social but also environmental impact). We will try to enhance the work and relationships developed in DelFin and to involve, as far as possible, some partners from the consortium. We will try to capitalize on the DelFin results. • Thanks to its participation to the SEED project (Social innovation EcosystEm Development), financed by the EFS under the EC EASI programme, as well as thanks to the ESF Transnational Cooperation Platform Community of Practice on Social Innovation, Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intends to further disseminate the DelFin results, the Toolbox and the policy recommendation. • If the project submitted by Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini in partnership with IFKA (UH) under the call for proposal Horizon Governance (currently under evaluation) will be funded, this will offer other relevant dissemination opportunities at international level for the DelFin results and the Toolbox. • Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini believe that the experience of the “Social Business Pitching Forum” (developed in the transnational marketplace of DelFin within the Impact Conference 2021), should somehow be maintained by the partnership. It should be relaunched every year in the framework of the Impact Conference, and be extended to new territories, since it is important to give local businesses from rural/mountain areas an international showcase in which to feel valued. Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini will propose to DelFin consortium to work further in this direction and will remain available to collaborate. 	<p>Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini ritengono che le attività di collaborazione transnazionale, anche nell'ambito di nuovi progetti su questi temi, debbano essere rafforzate.</p> <p>A tal fine sono previste molteplici attività:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intendono ricercare nuove opportunità di collaborazione a livello transnazionale per lo sviluppo di nuovi progetti UE/interreg relativi alle aree rurali/montane e alle imprese orientate all'impatto (da intendersi non solo come impatto sociale ma anche ambientale). Cercheremo di valorizzare il lavoro e le relazioni sviluppate in DelFin e di coinvolgere, per quanto possibile, alcuni partner del consorzio. Cercheremo di capitalizzare i risultati di DelFin. • Grazie alla sua partecipazione al progetto SEED (Social innovation EcosystEm Development), finanziato dall'FSE nell'ambito del programma della CE EASI, nonché grazie alla Piattaforma di cooperazione transnazionale "ESF Community of Practice on Social Innovation", Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini intende ulteriormente diffondere i risultati di DelFin, il Toolbox e le raccomandazioni di policy. • Se il progetto presentato da Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini in partnership con IFKA (UH) nell'ambito del bando Horizon Governance (attualmente in fase di valutazione) sarà finanziato, questo offrirà altre importanti opportunità di diffusione a livello internazionale dei risultati di DelFin e del Toolbox. • Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini ritengono che l'esperienza del “Social Business Pitching Forum” (sviluppata nel marketplace transnazionale di DelFin nell'ambito della Impact Conference 2021), debba in qualche modo essere mantenuta dalla partnership. Va rilanciata ogni anno nell'ambito della Impact Conference, ed estesa a nuovi territori, poiché è importante dare alle imprese locali delle aree rurali/montane una vetrina internazionale in cui sentirsi valorizzate. Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini proporranno al consorzio DelFin di lavorare ulteriormente in questa direzione e resteranno disponibili a collaborare.

PART 2 – ACTIONS IMPLEMENTATION	PARTE 2 – SVILUPPO DELLE AZIONI
Action 1: promote the networking and coordination among the relevant players of the ecosystem, in the development of new support measures for social entrepreneurship and related funding instruments	Azione 1: promuovere il networking e il coordinamento fra i diversi attori dell'ecosistema, nello sviluppo di nuove misure di sostegno all'imprenditorialità sociale e relativi strumenti di finanziamento
<p><u>Activities to be implemented:</u></p> <p>Year 2022 will be dedicated to set the bases to establish and consolidate the collaboration process within the ecosystem, through the following activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consolidate the network on support to social enterprises in rural/mountain areas >> Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini will further develop contacts and exchanges with relevant public and private stakeholders (see list below) and will explain their proposal to cooperate in order to favour the set-up of new co-designed support/funding measures. 2. First ecosystem coordination meeting >> Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini will organise a workshop to present the proposed action to the stakeholders in order to receive feedbacks and build consensus. The services and tools collected in the DelFin Toolbox will be further presented and discussed, in relation to the needs of the local system represented by the different stakeholders. 3. Capacity building >> The Capacity Building Actions of the Project SEED (Social innovation Ecosystem Development) addressed to the actors of the local ecosystem, will stimulate the synergy between the different actors in order to generate new actions of support to the SE in rural areas. 4. Bilateral collaboration for co-design >> Finpiemonte, as regional funding agency, will collaborate with some of the stakeholders in the ecosystem to contribute to the co-design of new/improved support measure. The services and tools presented in DelFin Toolbox will be taken as reference guidelines. The Piedmont Region as regional policy maker 	<p><u>Attività da realizzare:</u></p> <p>L'anno 2022 sarà dedicato a porre le basi per stabilire e consolidare il processo di collaborazione all'interno dell'ecosistema, attraverso le seguenti attività:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consolidare la collaborazione fra gli attori che operano a sostegno delle imprese sociali nelle aree rurali/montane >> Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini svilupperanno ulteriormente contatti e scambi con gli stakeholders pubblici e privati rilevanti (vedi elenco sotto) e illustreranno la loro proposta di cooperare al fine di favorire la messa a punto di nuove misure di sostegno/finanziamento co-progettate. 2. Primo incontro di coordinamento dell'ecosistema >> Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini organizzeranno un incontro di presentazione della proposta agli stakeholder, per ricevere feedback e costruire consenso. I servizi e gli strumenti raccolti nel DelFin Toolbox saranno ulteriormente presentati e discussi, in relazione ai fabbisogni del contesto locale rappresentati dai diversi stakeholder. 3. Capacity building >> Le azioni di capacity building del progetto SEED (Social innovation Ecosystem Development) rivolte agli attori dell'ecosistema locale, stimoleranno la sinergia tra i diversi attori al fine di generare nuove azioni di supporto rivolte alle SE nelle aree rurali. 4. Collaborazione bilaterale per la co-progettazione >> Finpiemonte, in qualità di agenzia di finanziamento regionale, collaborerà con alcuni degli stakeholder dell'ecosistema per contribuire alla co-progettazione di una nuova/migliorata misura di sostegno. I servizi e gli strumenti presenti nel Toolbox DelFin saranno presi a riferimenti come linee guida. Anche la Regione Piemonte, in qualità di

<p>and ESF and ERDF Managing Authority will also be involved as key player in this process.</p> <p>In year 2023 and 2024 we expect that coordination meetings will take place regularly, at least twice a year, involving all the relevant players. In the meanwhile, the bilateral contacts will develop among the players of the ecosystem to collaborate on the co-design of new support measures.</p> <p>Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini and Finpiemonte will monitor the progresses of this process and its outputs for the whole period.</p>	<p>policy maker regionale e di Autorità di Gestione del FSE e del FESR, sarà coinvolta come attore chiave in questo processo.</p> <p>Nell'anno 2023 e 2024 prevediamo che le riunioni di coordinamento si svolgano regolarmente, almeno due volte l'anno, coinvolgendo tutti gli attori rilevanti. Nel frattempo, si svilupperanno i contatti bilaterali tra gli attori dell'ecosistema per collaborare alla co-progettazione delle loro nuove misure di sostegno.</p> <p>Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini e Finpiemonte seguiranno l'andamento di questo processo e i suoi output per l'intero periodo.</p>
<p><u>Outputs/Indicators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * ONE or MORE support actions for SEs in rural areas will result from the co-design process involving two or more player in a synergic manner. The new/improved tools or services will directly refer to the application of the Delfin Toolbox. * ONE regional funding measure with ESF funds will be launched by Regione Piemonte with the support of Finpiemonte, based on the lessons learned from Delfin and on the Toolbox application. * SEVERAL in depth exchanges will take place between Finpiemonte and some relevant players in order to decide about the possibility of setting-up a new funding measure, that should be co-managed and co-funded by one public and one private funding organisation, as from the tool Rinascimento Firenze (see Delfin Toolbox). * ONE capacity bulding workshop 	<p><u>Risultati attesi/Indicatori:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * UNA o PIU' azioni di sostegno alle SE nelle aree rurali risulteranno dal processo di co-progettazione che coinvolgerà due o più attori in modo sinergico. I nuovi o migliorati strumenti e servizi faranno diretto riferimento all'applicazione del Toolbox Delfin. * UNA misura di finanziamento regionale con fondi FSE sarà lanciata dalla Regione Piemonte con la collaborazione di Finpiemonte, sulla base degli insegnamenti tratti da Delfin e dell'applicazione del Toolbox. * NUMEROSI scambi approfonditi avranno luogo tra Finpiemonte e alcuni attori dell'ecosistema, al fine di decidere in merito alla possibilità di istituire una nuova misura di finanziamento, che dovrebbe essere cogestita e cofinanziata da un ente di finanziamento pubblico e da uno privato, come dal modello del tool Rinascimento Firenze (vedi Delfin Toolbox). * UN laboratorio di capacity building
<p><u>Milestones per year:</u></p> <p>2022: Activation of relevant players</p> <p>2022: The tandem partners will hold one meeting and one CB workshop with the relevant players.</p> <p>2023: Monitoring of new social-impact initiatives/ideas that arise from local territories (to map the demand for support measures).</p>	<p><u>Passi intermedi per anno:</u></p> <p>2022: Attivazione degli attori rilevanti</p> <p>2022: I partner piemontesi organizzeranno congiuntamente un incontro e un workshop di capacity building con gli attori interessati</p> <p>2023: Monitoraggio di nuove iniziative/idee di progetti ad impatto sociale che emergono dai territori locali (per mappare la domanda di misure di sostegno).</p>

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<p>2023: Launch and promotion of at least one funding/support measure, based on an ecosystem multi-players approach</p> <p>2024: Launch and promotion of at least one funding/support measure, based on an ecosystem multi-players approach</p>	<p>2023: Lancio e promozione di almeno una misura di finanziamento/sostegno, basata su un approccio multi-player ecosistemico</p> <p>2024: Lancio e promozione di almeno una misura di finanziamento/sostegno, basata su un approccio basato su più attori dell'ecosistema</p>
<p><u>Key Actors to be involved:</u></p> <p>Finpiemonte, Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, Regione Piemonte, IRES, UNCEM, Ashoka Italia, Nemo, Forum del Terzo Settore, Fondazione Compagnia di Sanpaolo, Fondazione CRC, Fondazione Time2, Fondazione CRT, Banca Etica, SAA Scuola di Amministrazione Aziendale, Collegio Carlo Alberto, Local Action Groups, representative bodies of the third sector, other financial institutions, etc.</p>	<p><u>Attori chiave da coinvolgere:</u></p> <p>Finpiemonte, Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, Regione Piemonte, IRES, UNCEM, Ashoka Italia, Nemo, Forum del Terzo Settore, Fondazione Compagnia di Sanpaolo, Fondazione CRC, Fondazione Time2, Fondazione CRT, Banca Etica, SAA Scuola di Amministrazione Aziendale, Collegio Carlo Alberto, Gruppi di Azione Locale, enti di rappresentanza del terzo settore, altri enti finanziari, ecc.</p>
<p><u>Cost and funding sources:</u> The effort for setting up this networking and coordination process is included in the institutional activity of each player involved. The budget for the dissemination of some specific support measures will be made available in the framework of each single measure.</p>	<p><u>Copertura dei costi:</u> l'impegno per la creazione di questo processo di networking e coordinamento è incluso nell'attività istituzionale di ciascun attore coinvolto. Il budget per la diffusione/promozione delle specifiche misure di sostegno sarà messo a disposizione nell'ambito di ogni singola misura.</p>

Action 2 - transnational cooperation	Azione 2 – Cooperazione transnazionale
<p><u>Activities to be implemented:</u></p> <p>Years 2022, 2023 and 2024 will be dedicated to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Development of new EU/interreg projects: Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini will monitor the new calls for proposal at EU and interreg level in order to submit new projects that should capitalise from the experience gained in DelFin. Partner from the DelFin consortium will be also consulted/involved, when relevant. DelFin results dissemination: Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini will disseminate DelFin results and policy recommendation trough the SEED project (Social innovation EcosystEm Development) and through the ESF Transnational Cooperation Platform Community of Practice on Social Innovation. The activity will run in year 2022 and part of 2023. “Best Social Business Award in rural areas”: Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini are available to collaborate in 2022, 2023 and 2024 with the other DelFin partners at the future organisation of the Award, to contribute to the jury of experts and to stimulate some social enterprises from Piedmont to participate. 	<p><u>Attività da realizzare:</u></p> <p>Gli anni 2022, 2023 e 2024 saranno dedicati a:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sviluppo di nuovi progetti EU/interreg: Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini monitoreranno i nuovi bandi a livello EU e Interreg al fine di presentare nuovi progetti che potranno trarre vantaggio dall'esperienza maturata in DelFin. Verranno consultati/coINVOLTI anche i partner del consorzio DelFin, quando possibile. Diffusione dei risultati DelFin: Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini diffonderà i risultati DelFin e le raccomandazioni di policy attraverso il progetto SEED (Social innovation EcosystEm Development) e attraverso la piattaforma di cooperazione transnazionale ESF Community of Practice on Social Innovation. L'attività si svolgerà nell'anno 2022 e parte del 2023. “Best Social Business Award nelle aree rurali”: Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini sono disponibili a collaborare nel 2022, 2023 e 2024 con gli altri partner DelFin alla futura organizzazione del Premio, per contribuire alla giuria di esperti e per stimolare le imprese sociali piemontesi a partecipare.
<p><u>Outputs/Indicators:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * At least 2 projects submitted in the period [2022-2024]. * Dissemination activities of Delfin by FGB within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SEED project (Social innovation Ecosystem Development), funded by EFS under the EC EASI programme; - the Community of practice of the ESF transnational cooperation platform on social innovation. 	<p><u>Risultati attesi/Indicatori:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Almeno 2 nuovi progetti presentati nel periodo [2022-2024]. * Attività di disseminazione di DelFin da parte di FGB all'interno: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - progetto SEED (Social innovation EcosystEm Development), finanziato dall'EFS nell'ambito del programma EC EASI; - la Comunità di pratica della piattaforma di cooperazione transnazionale FSE sull'innovazione sociale.

<p>* Organisation of Best Social Business Award in rural areas in year 2022 and 2023</p>	<p>* Organizzazione del Best Social Business Award nelle aree rurali nell'anno 2022 e 2023, con partecipanti piemontesi.</p>
<p><u>Milestones per year:</u></p> <p><u>As for activity 1 - Development of new EU/interreg projects:</u></p> <p>2022: one project submitted by Finpiemonte and/or Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini in internal call for projects</p> <p>2023: one project submitted by Finpiemonte and/or Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini in international call for projects</p> <p><u>As for activity 2- DelFin results dissemination:</u></p> <p>2022: in a workshop with the National Advisory Board and project's national partners of the SEED project</p> <p>2023: in a workshop with the project's international partners of the SEED project</p> <p><u>As for activity 3 - "Best Social Business Award in rural areas":</u></p> <p>2022: at least one coordination call among the DelFin partner to agree about the organization of the "Best Social Business Award in rural areas" in the framework of the impact conference 2022.</p> <p>2023: at least one coordination call among the DelFin partner to agree about the organization of the "Best Social Business Award in rural areas" in the framework of the impact conference 2023.</p>	<p><u>Passi intermedi per anno:</u></p> <p><u>Per l'attività 1 - Sviluppo di nuovi progetti EU/interreg:</u></p> <p>2022: un progetto presentato da Finpiemonte e/o Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini su bando internazionale</p> <p>2023: un progetto presentato da Finpiemonte e/o Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini su bando internazionale</p> <p><u>Per l'attività 2 - Diffusione dei risultati DelFin:</u></p> <p>2022: all'interno di un workshop con il National Advisory Board e i partner nazionali del progetto SEED</p> <p>2023: all'interno di un workshop con i partner internazionali del progetto SEED</p> <p><u>Per l'attività 3 - "Best Social Business Award nelle aree rurali":</u></p> <p>2022: almeno un bando di coordinamento tra i partner DelFin per concordare l'organizzazione del "Best Social Business Award nelle aree rurali" nell'ambito della conferenza di impatto 2022.</p> <p>2023: almeno un bando di coordinamento tra i partner DelFin per concordare l'organizzazione del "Best Social Business Award nelle aree rurali" nell'ambito della conferenza di impatto 2023.</p>
<p><u>Key Actors to be involved:</u></p> <p>Activity 1 and 2 will be developed directly by Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini.</p> <p>Activity 3 will depend on the engagement of the other DelFin partner and especially on the active cooperation of the organisation responsible for the Impact Conference every year.</p>	<p><u>Attori chiave da coinvolgere:</u></p> <p>Le attività 1 e 2 saranno sviluppate direttamente da Finpiemonte e da Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini.</p> <p>L'attività 3 dipenderà dall'impegno degli altri partner di DelFin e soprattutto dalla collaborazione attiva dell'organizzazione responsabile della Impact Conference ogni anno.</p>

<p><u>Cost and funding sources:</u></p> <p>As for activity 1 >> covered with internal resources</p> <p>As for activity 2 >> covered with Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini internal resources</p> <p>As for activity 3 >> To be discussed with the other DelFin partners. By choosing an online conference system, organization costs could be minimise and sponsors/partners of this kind of event might be searched. Finpiemonte and Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini are ready to invest effort to collaborate with the other DelFin partners.</p>	<p><u>Copertura dei costi:</u></p> <p>Per l'attività 1 >> coperta con risorse interne</p> <p>Per l'attività 2 >> coperta con risorse interne di Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini</p> <p>Per l'attività 3 >> da valutare con gli altri partner di DelFin. Scegliendo un sistema di conferenze online, i costi di organizzazione potrebbero essere ridotti al minimo e potrebbero essere ricercati sponsor/partner di questo tipo di evento. Finpiemonte e Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini sono pronte a investire sforzi per collaborare con gli altri partner DelFin.</p>
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