

Social Entrepreneurship as a solution for improving the situation of vulnerable groups: Examples from Bulgaria

Current situation of Social enterprises in Bulgaria

- **Big variety of social enterprises in Bulgaria**
 - Sole traders who employ people from risk groups and/or offer services or products to such people;
 - Specialized enterprises for people with disabilities that provide employment to these vulnerable groups
 - Non-governmental organizations that develop economic activity within the legally established possibility for this or register commercial companies for the development of such activity, providing work for people from vulnerable groups
 - Social enterprises of the municipalities that provide employment for people from risk groups (most often people with disabilities)

- Social enterprises in the form of public-private partnerships with municipalities
- Day care centers for people with disabilities looking for business opportunities activity aimed at socialization and adaptation of its clients
- A social enterprise within a large industrial holding, established with purpose of employment of the workers who received a degree of disability while they are worked in the plant

Vulnerable groups in whose favor social enterprises work

- People from ethnic minority groups – Roma
- People in pre-retirement and retirement age
- Permanently unemployed
- Disabled people
- Drug addicts
- Former prisoners
- Children living outside the family environment
- Migrants and refugees

Example 1. National consumer cooperative of the blind in Bulgaria /NPKSB/



Съюз на слепите
в България

- It is a specialized social institution established in 1945
- It is unique in its structure, the only one in the country

WHAT SOCIAL ACTIVITIES DOES THE COOPERATION DEVELOP?

- employs member-cooperators for the purpose of retirement and material stimulation
- provides targeted and one-off social benefits in cash and/or in kind
- provides benefits in kind to member-cooperators who have children of school or pre-school age
- provides monthly scholarships to students and learners in mainstream schools
- provides social services

WHAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THE COOPERATIVE'S ACTIVITY?

- develops protection and social rehabilitation activities in all its forms for the integration of its members
- retail trade in textiles and knitwear
- rental of objects

Example 1A. National Union of cooperatives of the Disabled



Cooperatives activities in:

- Clothing
- Souvenirs
- Machine embroidery
- Bookbinding services
- Book packaging
- Plastic products
- Stamp making
- Copying services

Example 2. Land Source of Income

- Activities and testing financial schemes started in 1997
- It was registered in July 2003 in Plovdiv as a non-profit legal entity for carrying out activities for community benefit
- It works towards **sustainable development of rural regions through boosting the local economic initiative**



The priorities of the Foundation are as follows:

- Increasing the capacity of local institutions and organizations for fostering the process of rural region development
- Setting up and consolidation of local partnerships for the development and implementation of projects in support of small farmers
- Disseminating information and providing consulting services for the implementation of **sustainable agricultural practices in regions populated with mixed ethnic communities**
- Providing financial support for the implementation of local economic initiatives in the field of **agriculture and alternative businesses**

- **Land – Source of Income** is the main program of the Foundation
 - It provides opportunities to individuals or families
 - mainly from Roma communities in the villages in Plovdiv region, who own little or no land – to obtain agricultural land and to effectively cultivate it
- **Urban small business initiatives**
 - It provides opportunities for urban dwellers from Roma ethnicity to start a small business (hairdressing, car repair, bakery, tailoring, etc.)

The two organizational branches of the *Land Source of Income* Foundation – ***Agroinfo Centre and Land and Incomes Ltd.*** – provide information, consulting services and training, as well as access to financial resources



Example 3. Baker Brothers

- **Cause**: social inclusion of people from vulnerable communities
- **Support**: free training for persons from vulnerable communities to acquire skills for working in an artisanal bakery and acquiring knowledge needed to work in small bakeries

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION !