

# YOUTH SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP HUB ● ● ●

# YOUTH SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMPETENCES PROFILE



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CENTRUL ROMÂN  
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# Youth Social Entrepreneur Competences Profile

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## Introduction

The Youth social entrepreneurship competences profile has been developed in the framework of the Youth Social Entrepreneurship HUB (Y-SHE) project.



The aim of this document is on one hand to have a look at the social economy landscape and the role of young people at European level and in three countries (Italy, Romania and Belgium); and on the other hand to understand which are the competences that a young person needs to create its successful social enterprise.



The vision of this output is to create an environment and culture that encourages more young people to start and grow social businesses, and where every young person with the desire to start or grow a business has access to appropriate help and support and also to guide themselves in regards to profile characteristics. The profile of young social entrepreneur includes competences required to start-up and manage successfully a social enterprise.



Diesis Coop was the responsible of the production of this deliverable, with the contribution of all the partners of the project: Romanian Center for European Policies (Romania), Diesis Coop (Belgium), Consorzio Nazionale Meuccio Ruini Per La Formazione, I Servizi Al Lavoro E L'innovazione Tecnologica - Società Cooperativa (Italy) and Asociatia Centrul Pentru Legislatie Nonprofit (Romania).

This document is divided in two main parts: the European landscape on social economy and the country analysis of Italy, Romania and Belgium. For each country we have focused on the following points:

- ➔ Background research on the economic and social situation of the country, the social economy landscape and the role of young people in it;
- ➔ Interviews with young social entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs, on their experience and on which are the needs for the creation of a social enterprise;
- ➔ Analysis of the interview and understanding which are the competences needed for a young person to create a social enterprise.

Finally, the conclusions will draw a unique and final Young Social Entrepreneur Competences profile.

All the interviews with the young entrepreneurs and the aspiring entrepreneurs can be found in Annex. Meeting the young people.

A strong accent has been put on the input gathered from youth workers during the data collection phase of elaborating this particular output. Youth workers from each country (Romania, Italy and Belgium) have been involved in elaborating and designing the Young Social Entrepreneur Competences profile. Their role has been primordial, having in mind their experience and expertise in implementing successful social enterprises.

Plus, the Youth social entrepreneurship competences profile also aims to support the development of the other learning materials of the Y-SHE project, including an online hub.

### About the project...

The Youth Social Entrepreneurship HUB (Y-SHE) project aims to strengthen competences for social entrepreneurship of the youth workers and young people by developing learning materials and involving them in learning activities. The learning materials are innovative and propose to develop the knowledge and skills of young people to start-up and manage a social enterprise by involving them in creation and management of a virtual social enterprise. The project proposes to develop also the competences of youth workers to promote the social entrepreneurship among young people.

The platform developed in the project will allow young people to create the business plan with the financial reports and to track economic records. Virtual learning social enterprise platform is an interactive method aimed at developing entrepreneurship by applying interdisciplinary knowledge integration and ensuring conditions for deepening the practical skills acquired by youth in training. The goal of this method is teaching business skills development of youth by simulating the processes and activities that occur in a real company and its relationships with other companies and institutions.

The partnership is composed by Asociatia Centrul Roman De Politici Europene (Romania), Diesis Network (Belgium), Consorzio Meuccio Ruini (Italy) and Asociatia Centrul Pentru Legislatie Nonprofit (Romania).



## Methodology

Throughout the whole document, the partners of the project used several sources to write this document. Please find more information below.

### Literature and statistics review

The European landscape on social economy was developed thanks to official EU sources and studies, as well as documents and studies from research centres, think tanks and associations, as well as previous studies developed by Diesis.

For the desk research carried by the partners for their country, they were asked to analyse the social and economic situation of the country and the role of young people in it, as well as for the social economy and the role of young people in it. To do so, they were suggested to use official sources, national studies and statistics centres, as well as academic literature.

### Interviews

To find best practices of social enterprises created by young people and to understand which are the competences that a young person needs to open a social enterprise, each partner interviewed at least 3 young entrepreneurs and between 5 and 7 young aspiring entrepreneurs (by young we meant from 18 to 35 years old). The templates of the interview can be found in Annex 1 and 2. Diesis asked the partners to try to have if possible, an equal number of men and women and who have created or wish to create their enterprises in different fields. Between the interviews to the young entrepreneurs who created a social enterprise, some of these were picked as best practices and analysed more in depth, when this will be the case, a box will contain more information about the enterprise.

### Analysis

In the analysis part, each partner indicated which were the most important competences that an aspiring entrepreneur should have to become a real one (and which they already had), what tools are missing in each country to help these people to open their business and which are the opportunities for a young entrepreneur.



## EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework

In this document, as well as in the interviews, we referred to the JRC Policy Report called EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework<sup>1</sup> (JRC, 2016). According to the JRC Policy Report called EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework, an entrepreneur needs to have 15 competences divided in 3 main categories (5 per each): into action, resources and ideas & opportunities.

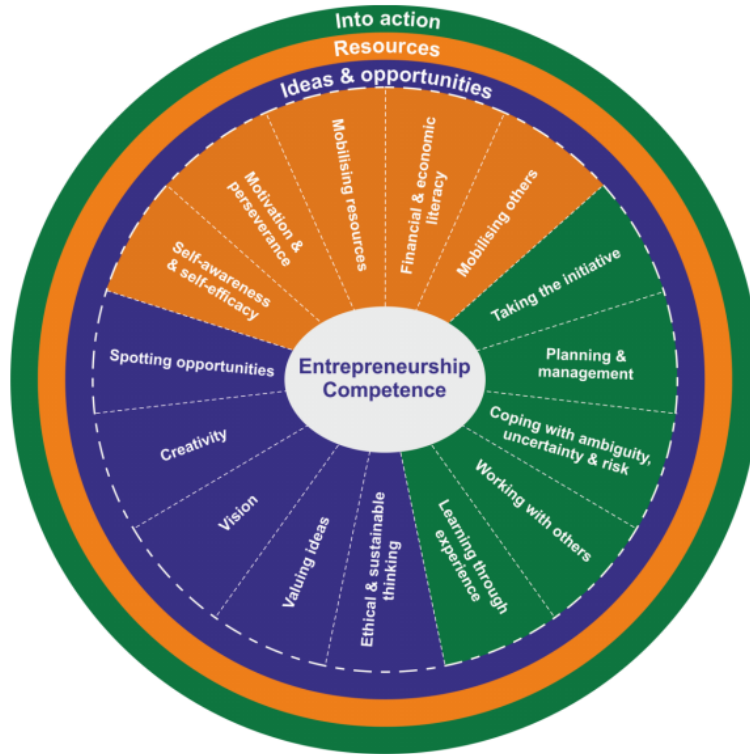


Figure 2: Areas and competences of the EntreComp conceptual model.

<sup>1</sup> JRC, EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (Margherita Bacigalupo, Panagiotis Kampylis), 2016 <http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC101581/Ifna27939enn.pdf>

**Table 1:** EntreComp conceptual model

Areas	Competences	Hints	Descriptors
1. Ideas and opportunities	<b>1.1 Spotting opportunities</b>	Use your <sup>2</sup> imagination and abilities to identify opportunities for creating value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and seize opportunities to create value by exploring the social, cultural and economic landscape</li> <li>Identify needs and challenges that need to be met</li> <li>Establish new connections and bring together scattered elements of the landscape to create opportunities to create value</li> </ul>
	<b>1.2 Creativity</b>	Develop creative and purposeful ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop several ideas and opportunities to create value, including better solutions to existing and new challenges</li> <li>Explore and experiment with innovative approaches</li> <li>Combine knowledge and resources to achieve valuable effects</li> </ul>
	<b>1.3. Vision</b>	Work towards your vision of the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imagine the future</li> <li>Develop a vision to turn ideas into action</li> <li>Visualise future scenarios to help guide effort and action</li> </ul>
	<b>1.4 Valuing ideas</b>	Make the most of ideas and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Judge what value is in social, cultural and economic terms</li> <li>Recognise the potential an idea has for creating value and identify suitable ways of making the most out of it</li> </ul>
	<b>1.5 Ethical and sustainable thinking</b>	Assess the consequences and impact of ideas, opportunities and actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the consequences of ideas that bring value and the effect of entrepreneurial action on the target community, the market, society and the environment</li> <li>Reflect on how sustainable long-term social, cultural and economic goals are, and the course of action chosen</li> <li>Act responsibly</li> </ul>
2. Resources	<b>2.1 Self-awareness and self-efficacy</b>	Believe in yourself and keep developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect on your needs, aspirations and wants in the short, medium and long term</li> <li>Identify and assess your individual and group strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>Believe in your ability to influence the course of events, despite uncertainty, setbacks and temporary failures</li> </ul>
	<b>2.2 Motivation and perseverance</b>	Stay focused and don't give up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be determined to turn ideas into action and satisfy your need to achieve</li> <li>Be prepared to be patient and keep trying to achieve your long-term individual or group aims</li> <li>Be resilient under pressure, adversity, and temporary failure</li> </ul>
	<b>2.3 Mobilizing resources</b>	Gather and manage the resources you need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get and manage the material, non-material and digital resources needed to turn ideas into action</li> <li>Make the most of limited resources</li> <li>Get and manage the competences needed at any stage, including technical, legal, tax and digital competences</li> </ul>
	<b>2.4 Financial and economic literacy</b>	Develop financial and economic know how	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estimate the cost of turning an idea into a value-creating activity</li> <li>Plan, put in place and evaluate financial decisions over time</li> <li>Manage financing to make sure my value-creating activity can last over the long term</li> </ul>

3. Into action	<b>2.5. Mobilizing others</b>	Inspire, enthuse and get others on board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspire and enthuse relevant stakeholders</li> <li>Get the support needed to achieve valuable outcomes</li> <li>Demonstrate effective communication, persuasion, negotiation and leadership</li> </ul>
	<b>3.1 Taking the initiative</b>	Go for it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate processes that create value</li> <li>Take up challenges</li> <li>Act and work independently to achieve goals, stick to intentions and carry out planned tasks</li> </ul>
	<b>3.2 Planning and management</b>	Prioritize, organize and follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set long-, medium- and short-term goals</li> <li>Define priorities and action plans</li> <li>Adapt to unforeseen changes</li> </ul>
	<b>3.3 Coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk</b>	Make decisions dealing with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make decisions when the result of that decision is uncertain, when the information available is partial or ambiguous, or when there is a risk of unintended outcomes</li> <li>Within the value-creating process, include structured ways of testing ideas and prototypes from the early stages, to reduce risks of failing</li> <li>Handle fast-moving situations promptly and flexibly</li> </ul>
	<b>3.4 Working with others</b>	Team up, collaborate and network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work together and co-operate with others to develop ideas and turn them into action</li> <li>Network</li> <li>Solve conflicts and face up to competition positively when necessary</li> </ul>
	<b>3.5. Learning through experience</b>	Learn by doing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use any initiative for value creation as a learning opportunity</li> <li>Learn with others, including peers and mentors</li> <li>Reflect and learn from both success and failure (your own and other people's)</li> </ul>



# European Landscape

## 1. About social economy

With term “social economy” we identify a range of concepts used in several Member States, for instance third sector, solidarity economy, alternative economy, non-profit sector, not-for-profit sector and voluntary sector. Despite national differences in legal forms and terminology, social economy enterprises are all inspired by the same values which are solidarity, social cohesion, and the primacy of the individual over capital, social responsibility, democratic management and the characteristic that they are not driven by profit and profits are reinvested in the company and in society.

The social economy represents a way of mobilising economic resources to satisfy human needs, which are neither for-profit enterprises nor public institutions, but which nevertheless produce goods and services.<sup>2</sup>

The social economy puts participatory democracy into practice in Europe. Its enterprises are organisations of people who carry economic activities with the objective of satisfying the needs of people rather than gaining a profit. Historically, in the European tradition, the organisations of the social economy are divided into four groups: associations, mutuals, co-operatives and foundations. Apart from these we have the social enterprises, which are the most innovative branch of the social economy. These kinds of enterprises can provide new innovative services to the society in which they are developed. In the last decades, in parallel with the rise of the social enterprises, the social economy has gradually been expanding its operational sectors, playing a key role during the economic crisis.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. About social enterprises

To have a unique definition of social enterprise is almost impossible. In fact, many definitions exist since several organisational forms are used in Europe and around the World. In Europe, social enterprises were born from the tradition of the social economy, which is characterised by principles and values listed above: solidarity, social cohesion, and the primacy of the individual over capital, social responsibility, democratic management, not-for-profit driven and reinvestment of the profit in the enterprise itself.<sup>4</sup>

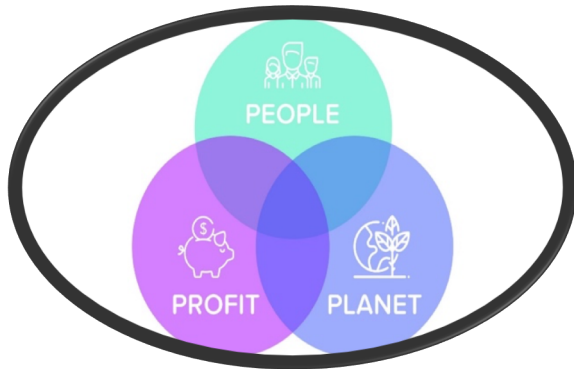
The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) gives the following definition of social enterprises: “any private activity conducted in the public interest, organised with an

<sup>2</sup> Borzaga et al., 2013; Moulaert and Ailenei, 2005

<sup>3</sup> [Diesis](#), How social enterprises contribute to sustainable food systems. Observation and Best Practices, 2016

<sup>4</sup> [Diesis](#), How social enterprises contribute to sustainable food systems. Observation and Best Practices, 2016

entrepreneurial strategy, but whose main purpose is not the maximisation of profit but the attainment of certain economic and social goals, and which has the capacity to bring innovative solutions to the problems of social exclusion and unemployment”.<sup>5</sup>



In the last decade, the European Commission has identified the social economy and social enterprises as innovative responses to the current economic, social and environmental challenges, in which social entrepreneurs are striving to make a significant impact on society, the economy and the environment.<sup>6</sup>

The Social Business Initiative (SBI), launched in 2011, was an important package of actions to support the development of social enterprises. It contained 11 priority measures, organised in three themes:

facilitating access to funding, improving the visibility of social entrepreneurship and simplifying the regulatory environment.<sup>7</sup>

In the SBI the European Commission has proposed the following operational definition of social enterprises: “an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for its 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”.<sup>8 9</sup>

“A social enterprise is a business run for a social purpose, where specific and well-defined social goals are translated into an organisation, which often performs activities of general interest and is managed in an entrepreneurial way, keeping a constant balance between its social and the economic dimensions. Social enterprises are able to provide solutions to social problems thanks to an entrepreneurship and is economically sustainable approach in some ways more effective and efficient than what could be done by the institutions alone.

Social enterprises apply commercial and entrepreneurial strategies to maximise improvements in human and environmental well-being. In these kind of enterprises the profits earned are mainly reinvested in supporting their social mission. The presence of constraints on profit and asset distribution, ensures the consolidation of the organisations and the pursuit of their goals in the long term”.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> OECD, Policy Brief on Social Entrepreneurship, 2013

[https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/Social%20entrepreneurship%20policy%20brief%20EN\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/Social%20entrepreneurship%20policy%20brief%20EN_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> European Commission, A map of social enterprises and their eco-systems in Europe Synthesis Report, 2015  
<file:///C:/Users/Utente/Downloads/Synthesis%20report%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> The Social Business Initiative of the European Commission [file:///C:/Users/Utente/Downloads/sbi-brochure-web\\_en.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Utente/Downloads/sbi-brochure-web_en.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee Of The Regions “Social Business Initiative: creating a favourable climate for social enterprises, key stakeholders in the social economy and innovation” COM(2011) 682/2

<sup>9</sup> [Diesis](#), How social enterprises contribute to sustainable food systems. Observation and Best Practices, 2016

<sup>10</sup> [Diesis](#), How social enterprises contribute to sustainable food systems. Observation and Best Practices, 2016



Nowadays, social enterprises are present in almost every sector of the economy, serving the needs and interests of their communities and society. Indeed, social enterprises are versatile organisations, which address areas of unmet social need and create new social opportunities where other actors have failed to act. Having in mind the impact they have on the environment and society as part of their long-term vision and strategy, ultimately, they contribute to smart and sustainable growth.<sup>11</sup>

### 3. About the importance of social economy in the economic and social landscape

The European social economy is gaining more and more importance in the European economic system. In fact, according to a study produced by the European Economic and Social Committee and the CIRIEC, “Recent evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union” (2017), the European social economy provides:

- More than 13.6 million paid jobs in Europe
- More or less 6.3% of the working population of the EU-28
- Employment of a workforce of over 19.1 million, including paid and non-paid
- Beyond 82.8 million volunteers, which means to 5.5 million full time workers
- Beyond than 232 million members of cooperatives, mutuals and similar entities
- More than 2.8 million entities and enterprises.

Of course, this panorama may vary among EU countries. In fact, employment in the social economy accounts for between 9% and 10% of the working population in countries with a long-lasting tradition in this field such as Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, France and the Netherlands. However, in new Member States such as Slovenia, Romania, Malta, Lithuania, Croatia, Cyprus and Slovakia the social economy remains a small emerging sector, that employs under 2% of the working population.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> [Diesis](#), How social enterprises contribute to sustainable food systems. Observation and Best Practices, 2016

<sup>12</sup> European Economic and Social Committee and the CIRIEC, Recent evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union, 2017

<http://unsse.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CIRIEC-EESC-Executive-Summary-1.6.2017-1.pdf>

#### 4. Social enterprises and youth employment

Social enterprises have a valuable role in creating employment opportunities through:

- ➔ self-employment and the employees hired in a social enterprise and;
- ➔ the mission of some social enterprises to improve the skills and employability of persons for whom labour markets are more distant.

Therefore, several EU initiatives have targeted social enterprises as a lever to increase job opportunities among young people. The socially driven principles that characterise social enterprises make them especially adequate to address the risks of social exclusion faced by many young Europeans today.<sup>13</sup> In this paper, we are going to focus on the first option: self-employment of young people.

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<sup>13</sup> Eurodiaconia, Youth inclusion through social entrepreneurship, 2017  
[https://www.eurodiaconia.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/MISC\\_26\\_16-Social-Entrepreneurship-and-Youth-Unemployment.pdf](https://www.eurodiaconia.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/MISC_26_16-Social-Entrepreneurship-and-Youth-Unemployment.pdf)



# Country Analysis



ITALY



## Background

### 1. Description of the economic and social context in the country

#### Overview

In Italy there are wide social, economic and geographical gaps. We can affirm that, those who are poor remain so over time: 62% of Italians who are in the lower 20% in the distribution of income remain so even after 4 years. This percentage is higher by 5.5 points than the average of the 36 OECD countries.<sup>14</sup>

Non-encouraging consumption data comes from similar premises. In 2017, Italy remains the largest country in Europe with a reduction in household consumption, compared to 2010, of over 2% (-2.2%). In comparison, + 12.7% in Germany, +10,2% in France and of substantial stability in Spain (0.1%).<sup>15</sup>

Plus, there are some inequalities: wealthy families spend 4 times more than those with low spending power. Furthermore, between a Trentino and a Calabrian family the difference is equal to 17,000 euros per year. Surprising are the compulsory expenses such as those on health (almost 40 billion euros for private healthcare spending in Italy in 2017) and, for those who can afford them, there are excellent services for people and free time (in particular catering + 7, 8% and travel). Plus, in the last few years, clothing has declined, with footwear accounting for -4.8% and transport (-14.9%).<sup>16</sup>

#### The sectors that resist in Italy: the economy that drives.

The country is driven by the manufacturing sector and industrial production. Looking at the data of the last 18 years, we may notice the difficulties that have affected the lack of GDP growth. Compared to 2000, Italy has a negative manufacturing sector differential of 16.1 percentage points. The sectors that have registered the most negative results are:

1. rubber / plastic (-27.4 percent)
2. the mobile (-28.4 percent)

<sup>14</sup> Iri Information Resources, GFK, Demos, Nomisma.

<sup>15</sup> Iri Information Resources, GFK, Demos, Nomisma

<sup>16</sup> Iri Information Resources, GFK, Demos, Nomisma.



3. wood / paper / printing (-32.9 percent)
4. textiles / clothing / footwear (-34.3 percent)
5. the computer / electronics (-38.4 percent)
6. electrical and non-electrical household appliances (-49.9 percent)

Of all the sectors analysed, only food / beverages (+15.7 percent) and pharmaceuticals (+31.6 percent) have increased production over the past 18 years.<sup>17</sup>

## 2. Description of the social economy context in the country and the role of young people in it

### Overview

If we focus on the years between 2001 and 2017, the number of cooperatives active (in particular in the sectors: social (type A and B,) agricultural, fishing, production and work) in Italy has increased from 70.029 to 81.079 (+ 15.8%). Cooperative and enterprises are presented in all areas of the country and operate in all economic sectors, both traditional and innovative. We can borrow the distinction made by the European Commission defining the social enterprise based in three dimensions: a) Social dimension; b) the entrepreneurial dimension and governance ownership dimension.<sup>18</sup>

Overall, at the end of 2017, the cooperative movement had over 13.5 million members and 350 million employed, 52% of whom are women. The relative turnover achieved an aggregate turnover of almost 161 billion of Euro (between active cooperatives and subsidiary companies). Over € 8.5 billion in turnover comes from exports, +48% compared to the pre-crisis years, demonstrating that the policies of grouping and dimensional growth have enabled companies to use export as an anti-crisis lever. Finally, if we consider the employment issue, between 2012 and 2016, in Italian cooperatives employees increased from 6.7% to 7%.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, the growth of the cooperative movement was not only numerical. The system has also grown in modernity and social cohesion.

Concerning, the gender issue in 2018, there were 19,299 active cooperatives created by women. The incidence of active female cooperatives on the total number of cooperatives active in Italy has reached 23.8%.<sup>20</sup>

Compared to the previous year, the cooperative system has also grown in integration and multiculturalism with 5,315 cooperatives of foreigners (migrants) at the beginning of 2018 (+ 3.5%). Social economy and cooperative has also been an answer to youth unemployment during the crisis years (there are 7,195 active youth cooperatives at the beginning of 2018, equal to 8.9% of the ones active in Italy).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> <http://dati.istat.it>

<sup>18</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?advSearchKey=social+enterprises+and+their+ecosystems+in+europe&mode=advancedSubmit&catId=22&doc\\_submit=&policyArea=0&policyAreaSub=0&country=0&year=0](https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?advSearchKey=social+enterprises+and+their+ecosystems+in+europe&mode=advancedSubmit&catId=22&doc_submit=&policyArea=0&policyAreaSub=0&country=0&year=0)

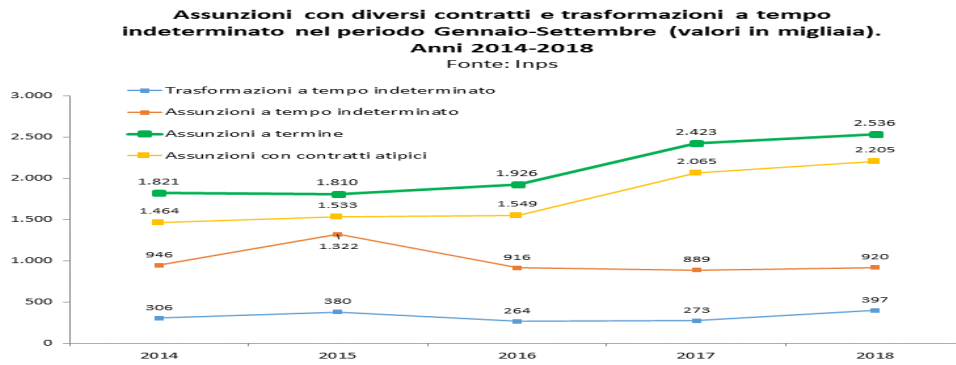
<sup>19</sup> <https://www.istat.it/it/archivio>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.istat.it/it/archivio>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.istat.it/it/archivio>



## The role of young people in social economy



Source: Recruitment with different kind of contracts and transformations in long term contracts between Jan-Sept 2014/2018. INPS <https://www.inps.it>

A recent survey conducted by ForceManager among young people between the ages of 22 and 37 [on a panel of 300 young people interviewed] highlights the expectations and desires of the new generations with respect to the world of work. The desire to do business and work in a start-up stands out. As well as the desire to have autonomy and flexibility through smart working and the willingness to give up a normal “competitive” salary if they were offered a remuneration package that includes bonuses and stock options (ie quotas of the company), directly linked to the performance of the company.<sup>22</sup>

If the world of work is changing, requiring more and more entrepreneurial attitudes, this survey shows that young people are beginning to ride this change. Having abandoned the culture of the 'fixed place', very dear to previous generations, the young Italians of today (according to the photograph taken by this Forcemanager survey) have other ambitions, in particular that one of carving out a gratifying and engaging work position beyond the real salary. A job that is more adherent to new habits and lifestyles, which gives autonomy, flexibility; and an employer who also takes care of their well-being as people.

The salary has become less relevant for young people: 52% of respondents consider benefits and agile work more important than the amount indicated in the pay stub. They even say they are willing to give up a share of remuneration so as to be able to exploit smart working programs or work remotely to manage their own work and private life, as the increasingly widespread culture of digital nomadism wants.<sup>23</sup>

For about the 75% of young people it is essential to feel involved in the company project in which they work for.<sup>24</sup>

Questo quello che hanno da dire...



Source: <https://www.alleanzacooperative.it/uffici-studi/documenti/indagini-congiunturali/>

<sup>22</sup> Iri Information Resources, GFK, Demos, Nomisma.

<sup>23</sup> Iri Information Resources, GFK, Demos, Nomisma.

<sup>24</sup> <http://dati.istat.it>

## The presence of women...

Most of the women entrepreneurs are involved in companies in the following sectors: health, social services, education and catering, and tend above all to focus on marginalization and exclusion problems.

The social inclusion of disadvantaged groups is the favourite topic of women entrepreneurs. This is followed by education and training, sustainable development and the environment, children and young people. There are also brilliant cases of female social entrepreneurship in economic sectors linked to a more traditional type of business: this is the case of the Italian Emanuela Donetti, who with her start-up Urbano Creativo has established itself as one of the pioneers of the new "smart cities" project.

The most common obstacles to their success financial: on one hand we have the lack of available funding and on the other the difficulties in accessing existing ones.

Plus, women play an extremely important role in generic "welfare services", such as care of children and the elderly, a role that takes time and energy away from the business activity. Often, women also face personal problems related to the lack or lack of an adequate economic background and/or to a lack of self-confidence. Precisely for this reason the diffusion of knowledge on female social entrepreneurship is needed: to allow information to circulate, to already established entrepreneurs to become mentors of future ones and to the sector to acquire an increasingly important and structured dimension.

Moreover, there is still a persistent discrimination by investors and the "pay gap" also exists in the social economy, even if it is true that it is smaller than in the traditional economy.

Therefore, could the social economy be a way to reach the much debated equality between women and men?

The women of a cooperative named "[WEstart](#)" reply that it is complicated. We want to answer yes. That "WEstart" demonstrates, indeed, the enormous potential that female social entrepreneurship has in helping to create sustainable profit, a positive social impact and new jobs. That these activities naturally lead to women's empowerment and contribute to gender equality in societies.

And the women themselves say it. Nine out of ten recognize that their activity has emancipated them, and 88% add that they feel they are contributing to the achievement of gender equality. Even if they are not on the podium of the missions most pursued by these companies, women's emancipation and gender equality come as a natural consequence, and they end up there anyway, on that podium.

From here, a simple conclusion: favouring social entrepreneurship means favouring women's emancipation, and favouring the latter is shortening the distance that still separates us from cutting the goal of gender equality.



## Analysis

All the interviews with the young entrepreneurs and the aspiring entrepreneurs can be found in Annex I: Meeting the young people in Italy

### 1. Competences: which competences a young need to become a young entrepreneur?

Despite the fact that Italy has a long-lasting tradition in the field of social economy, the creation of a social enterprise in the country, especially in the South, comes with several challenges. Indeed, it is true that Italy offers a long-lasting tradition in the field of social economy, but this does not necessarily mean that is widely known by all the citizens, and that people, in general, considered it as a valid form of business (also because sometimes there is uncertainty about the legal status). Moreover, in Italy, the social economy sector is often associated to some very defined fields such as health assistance for instance.

Plus, there is a lack of tools to promote and encourage the creation of social enterprises, especially by young people. This not only refers to financial and economic support and tools, but also to education and mentoring programs about social entrepreneurship, incubators, legal assistance, etc (as it will be explained in detail in the following section).

Vision, ethical and sustainable thinking and creativity are competences that a young entrepreneur must have to successfully create a social enterprise, and these do not lack in Italy. Other competences that are harder to acquire, but that are needed for a young wishing to create a social enterprise in Italy are motivation and perseverance (which can be a real issue, especially in some parts of the country where tools to support the creation of such enterprises lack the most), financial and economic literacy, and self-awareness and self-efficacy (especially if the context where the social enterprise will be open does not valorise this kind of business). The other competences that are needed for an Italian social entrepreneur are planning and management, working with others and learning through experience. These are fundamental but also difficult to acquire without good education and mentoring programs and considering the lack of work experience that many young people have.



Therefore, the competences need for an Italian young person wishing to create its social enterprise are:

- For “Ideas and opportunities”: vision, ethical and sustainable thinking and creativity.
- For “Resources”: Motivation and perseverance, financial and economic literacy and self-awareness and self-efficacy.
- For “Into action”: planning and management, working with others and learning through experience.

	<b>Competence</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Generally, are these competences acquired by aspiring entrepreneurs?</b>
<b>Ideas and opportunities</b>	<b>Vision</b>	Because one must have in mind the project it needs to do.	YES
	<b>Ethical &amp; sustainable thinking</b>	Because only in this way there is a development that satisfies the needs of the present without compromising the possibility of future generations to satisfy their own.	YES
	<b>Creativity</b>	Because only with creativity can innovative ideas and projects be developed and implemented.	YES
<b>Resources</b>	<b>Motivation &amp; Perseverance</b>	Because if one does not have no real motivation and interest it will not be able to reach the goals set.	Not always
	<b>Financial &amp; economic literacy</b>	Because only with these assumptions a project can be followed and executed correctly.	Not always
	<b>Self-awareness &amp; self-efficacy</b>	Because self-awareness as well as self-efficacy are important for understanding what can and cannot be done.	Not always
<b>Into action</b>	<b>Planning &amp; management</b>	Because a project must have a planning to be managed correctly.	Not always
	<b>Working with others</b>	Because synergy is fundamental to know how to work with others, and team work is the key for a successful project.	Not always
	<b>Learning through experience</b>	Because experience is fundamental for create an enterprise and also for transferring know-how to others.	Not always

## 2. Gaps: what misses in order to allow young to become social entrepreneurs?

### a. What tools do young people have to become an entrepreneur in Italy?

Young entrepreneurs have the potential to build a new economic dynamic that generates growth and employment. The EU 2020 growth strategy pays particular attention to the promotion of entrepreneurship and includes an entrepreneurial action plan focused on creating a more favourable environment to support youth entrepreneurship.



The main tools that young people need to have are:

- Networking and communication skills. Communication plays a significant role for entrepreneurs helping them to express their ideas clearly and effectively, to persuade, influence, encourage, negotiate and develop interpersonal relationships with people both inside and outside the company environment.
- Planning a business plan and access to finance. According to entrepreneurs, it is very important to know how to design a business plan that will provide a clear and complete presentation of the objectives and activities that the company is about to develop. At the same time, young entrepreneurs believe that access to finance and the availability of financial resources are extremely important factors in maintaining the sustainability of their business.
- Digital marketing skills. Young entrepreneurs believe that digital skills are key factors to increase competitiveness, productivity, innovation and professionalism. It is believed that the knowledge of the use of digital tools and technologies is vital for an entrepreneur and for the growth of his business.

**b. What are the missing tools that your people would need to become a young entrepreneur in Italy?**

Growing youth unemployment threatens economic and political stability. There is a growing need for alternative means of job creation: youth entrepreneurship could be part of the solution. What is certainly lacking is education and training, both are essential to develop the entrepreneurial mindset and the specific skills for starting up and developing businesses. Cultural perceptions and the acceptance of entrepreneurial risk and entrepreneurship failure represent significant obstacles to building an entrepreneurial society. Politicians have a role to play here. As policies frame the public option, policy makers should consider how profiling successful young entrepreneurs as role models and the use of social media can contribute to a more favourable business culture. Recognizing failure as a learning opportunity must be part of the political message. Furthermore, it is necessary to reconsider the teaching and learning processes at school to provide young people with the skills necessary to manage failures and success which are particular challenges for today's entrepreneur.

Evidence shows that the rate of students starting their own businesses increases three times after attending an entrepreneurship program at school. Policymakers should consider integrating "entrepreneurial experience" into the curriculum. Entrepreneurship is more developed in vocational education and training with a specific focus on building entrepreneurial skills. However, more attention must be given to entrepreneurship as a "key competence" to build the entrepreneurial mind-set of the next generation. The entrepreneurial mentality includes a set of cognitive and behavioural traits for example, search for opportunities, risk management and creative problem solving. The crux of the matter is that in developing the entrepreneurial mentality of young people, we do not only prepare them for business start-up, we helps them in all the procedures. Those who do not follow the start-up path turn to more entrepreneurial employees, increasing quality and productivity in the workplace. Furthermore, a policy framework is needed to support lifelong entrepreneurial learning to create changes throughout the system. Addressing entrepreneurship from the primary to the tertiary level creates the potential for a "domino effect" throughout the learning system. The involvement of the non-formal and private sector in the promotion of entrepreneurship in schools and universities can improve the curriculum and the learning process. Teacher training (both pre-service and in-service) will be fundamental for the broader path of entrepreneurial learning. In short, teachers and schools must be an integral part of a nation's entrepreneurial agenda.

But education and training cannot be disconnected from the wider support system for entrepreneurship. A coordinated policy response is needed to ensure that the energy and drive of young people are best exploited to meet the needs of a 21st century economy.

All young people must understand entrepreneurship to make an informed career choice. The commitment of companies with career guidance services that recognize and promote entrepreneurship as a labour market opportunity would encourage young people to consider self-employment and business development as their professional path. Ensuring that young people are ready to take over and develop a family business must be part of this dynamic. Career guidance services could therefore play a key role in supporting young people and family businesses in business succession.

### 3. Opportunities: what opportunities does a young entrepreneur has?

#### a. What opportunities does Italy offer to young people and stimulate them to become young entrepreneurs?

Every year there are tenders that encourage young people to become entrepreneurs and to open activities, an example is the "Resto al Sud" project in which the State provides up to 200 thousand euros to the people who present an innovative and sustainable project over time. 35% of this sum is non-repayable, the remaining 65% must be repaid in a facilitated manner two years after the start of the payment. This is an interesting way to stimulate the creativity of people to stay in their own cities of origin.

#### b. In which fields are there more opportunities for the creation of a social enterprise?

In recent years the social enterprise has distinguished itself within the broader "Third sector", which also includes all those organizations that pursue social goals, but only do so using voluntary and free forms. In Italy this form of economy and employment has recorded a strong increase in the volume of business, in the staff employed and in the variety of services offered, which can be different:

- social assistance, health care and health and social care;
- extra-school, university and post-graduate education, training and education, environmental protection, ecosystem and cultural heritage enhancement;
- cultural services and social tourism.

#### c. What opportunities young entrepreneurs and their social business could offer to their community?

In Italy, the opportunities that young entrepreneurs could offer to their community would surely be the pursuit of values such as cooperation, solidarity and sharing, all ethical values that instead tend to not be pursued for the personal maximization of profit and the exasperated search for competitiveness.

#### d. What are the advantages of becoming a young entrepreneur?

The advantages of becoming a young entrepreneur are first of all a personal growth that only an entrepreneurial role can give; and secondly the realization of a new innovative project.



## Background

### 1. Description of the economic and social context in the country

#### Overview

Since 2008, Romania has experienced a number of economic and social transformations. The economic growth registered until 2008 was followed by the economic crisis that hit Romania in the fall of 2008, having effects in all branches of society. The first consequence of the economic crisis was that young people went to other European Union countries in search of better living, the number of small entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized companies declined, and employees' incomes decreased, along with growth pressure on the social security budget. This situation is reflected in EUROSTAT data related to the evolution of gross domestic product and labor force-related outputs, and in the data of Romanian National Institute of Statistics. GDP decreased with 1600 euro per capita from 2008 to 2009, followed by an increase after 2013. There are regional development disparities in Romania, the poorest regions being North East and South West Oltenia. (Table 1) GDP values recorded before the economic crisis will be reached after four years of austerity and spending cuts in the public sector, without being granted salary increases for employees.

Table 1. GDP per inhabitant, Romania

GEO/TIME	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
EU - 28 countries	26,100	24,500	25,500	26,200	26,600	26,800	27,700	29,100	29,300	30,000
Romania	7,100	6,100	6,200	6,500	6,600	7,200	7,600	8,100	8,600	9,600
North-West	6,100	5,300	5,300	5,300	5,800	6,200	6,700	7,100	7,800	8,600
Center	6,500	5,600	5,700	5,800	6,400	6,700	7,000	7,500	8,200	9,100
North-East	4,200	3,600	3,600	3,600	4,200	4,500	4,600	4,900	5,300	5,900
South-East	5,400	4,700	4,800	5,200	5,700	6,400	6,800	6,900	7,200	8,100
South Muntenia	5,600	5,000	4,800	5,300	5,100	5,700	6,400	6,400	6,900	7,700
Buchares Ilfov	17,100	13,700	13,900	15,500	15,700	17,000	17,600	19,500	20,200	22,000
South-West Oltenia	5,000	4,400	4,500	4,400	5,000	5,300	5,400	5,800	6,200	6,900
West	7,500	6,400	6,600	6,800	7,000	7,500	7,600	8,400	9,200	10,200

Source: EUROSTAT, Unit-Euro per inhabitant.

#### The role of young people

The reduced birth rate after 1989 has as a consequence, demographically, the decrease of the number of young people under the age of 30 in Romania, although their percentage in the total population is around 5%, according to Romanian National Institute of Statistics (INS). This relative 5% share of young people creates a seemingly false demographic constant, but the absolute number of young people is steadily decreasing in the last 10 years. (Table 2) In the same time, the share of young people aged between 15 and 34 in the total population in the year 2018 is 23.5%, down 0.5% from 2017. This



situation gives an overview of the demographic evolution of Romania, the phenomenon of the aging of the population being constant since 1989.

**Table 2. Youth number in Romanian population**

Age groups	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Total RO population</b>	<b>20440290</b>	<b>20294683</b>	<b>20199059</b>	<b>20095996</b>	<b>20020074</b>	<b>19953089</b>	<b>19875542</b>	<b>19760585</b>	<b>19644350</b>	<b>19530631</b>
<b>15-19 years</b>	1152868	1128738	1111526	1102118	1091355	<b>1087420</b>	<b>1081723</b>	<b>1083486</b>	1074830	1053067
<b>20-24 years</b>	1397944	1386794	1371513	1350389	1273671	<b>1193052</b>	<b>1128781</b>	<b>1079744</b>	1047512	1026719
<b>25-29 years</b>	1328017	1313891	1305210	1308510	1344539	<b>1392394</b>	<b>1405475</b>	<b>1357276</b>	1291607	1208369
<b>30-34 years</b>	1542804	1534159	1531331	1514330	1456827	<b>1392303</b>	<b>1342570</b>	<b>1305614</b>	1292242	1315282

Source: INS, TEMPO On-line data base

In Romania, almost 75% of the population between 20-24 years old graduates upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education and only 7.2% graduates tertiary education. Comparing with EU 28 population, the percent of the people between 20-24 years old that graduates tertiary education is much lower in Romania (7.2% in Romania than 18.3% in EU 28). Only 25% of the 25-34 age people graduates tertiary education in Romania, comparing with 40% in EU-28. The percent of 25-34 age people that has only primary or lower secondary education is with 7% higher in Romania than the EU 28 average. (Table 3)

**Table 3. Education attainment level of 20-34 years old people**

Education attainment level	Age	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2)</b>	20-24	21.7	21.6	20.3	20.2	19.7	20.3	20.3	20.1	20.2	18.3
	25-34	23.2	23.9	23.9	23.2	22.8	24.5	23.8	23.6	23.5	23.0
<b>Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3-4)</b>	20-24	72.3	71.1	70.9	70.3	70.2	68.7	71.9	73.3	72.2	74.5
	25-34	57.2	55.4	53.6	53.3	52.9	50.0	50.7	51.6	50.9	52.1
<b>Tertiary education (levels 5-8)</b>	20-24	6.1	7.3	8.8	9.5	10.0	10.9	7.8	6.6	7.6	7.2
	25-34	19.5	20.7	22.5	23.6	24.4	25.4	25.5	24.8	25.6	24.9

Source: EUROSTAT, edat\_ifse\_03

Romania has one of the highest rate of risk of poverty or social exclusion at EU level, 35.7% of people being in risk of poverty and social exclusion in 2017. Young people represent a population with a high risk of poverty and social exclusion in Romania, 41% of youth being in risk according with Eurostat data. Even if the percent of young population in risk of poverty and social exclusion decrease after 2012, it is still high comparing with the EU 28 average. (Table 4)



Table 4. People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Total population</b>	EU 28	:	23.8	24.3	24.8	24.6	24.4	23.8	23.5	22.4
	RO		43.0	41.5	40.9	43.2	41.9	40.3	37.4	38.8
<b>15-29 years</b>	EU 28	:	27.3	28.2	29.6	29.6	29.7	29.2	28.9	27.5
	RO		42.8	41.6	43.5	47.4	46.6	45.5	42.8	44.3

Source: EUROSTAT, ilc\_peps01

### The employment situation, with a particular attention on unemployment of young people

Another interesting aspect is related to the occupation of young people aged 15-24. EUROSTAT data shows for Romania in 2017 that 245,000 young people of this age group are "occupied", but 151.000 are employed and 19.000 are self-employed, the others being "family workers", practically providing unpaid work in family (Table 5)

Table 5. Employed persons by professional status and age (Thousand persons), 2017

		Employed persons	Employed persons	Self-employed persons	Self-employed persons with employees (employers)	Self-employed persons without employees (own-account workers)	Independent self-employed without employees (own-account workers)	Dependent self-employed without employees (own-account workers)	Self-employed without employees (own-account workers), dependency not known	Contributing family workers
<b>15-24 year olds</b>	EU 28	8,840.7	8,462.1	250.8	:	229.9	190.3	:	:	122.9
	RO	245.9	151.1	19.0	:	19.0	15.2	:	:	75.7
<b>25-34 year olds</b>	EU 28	49,377.2	44,231.2	4,685.7	1,028.6	3,657.1	3,295.6	282.6	78.9	449.4
	RO	2,045.1	1,613.1	258.7	16.7	242.0	221.8	20.2	.	173.3

Source:EUROSTAT, lfso\_17csag

43% of the Romanian young people are employed, with almost 6% less than the EU average. The higher the education level of young people, the higher the percentage of young employees. Thus, 81% of the young people who graduated tertiary education are employed, comparing with 23% of the youth with primary or lower secondary education. The percent of young people employed with upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 3-4) and tertiary education (ISCED 5-8) increase between 2014 -2018. (Table 6)

Table 6. Youth employment by educational attainment level (%)

		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>All ISCED levels</b>	EU 28	47.6	47.2	46.4	45.9	46.4	47.3	48.3	49.2	49.8
	RO	40.6	39.9	40.2	40.2	41.0	43.1	41.5	43.3	43.0
<b>ISCED 0-2</b>	EU 28	27.4	27.7	26.3	25.5	24.1	24.1	24.6	25.0	25.3
	RO	25.3	23.2	23.8	23.6	24.5	25.0	24.0	25.1	23.4
<b>ISCED 3-4</b>	EU 28	55.5	55.0	54.0	53.3	53.8	54.8	55.9	56.9	57.5
	RO	46.3	46.1	46.5	46.7	48.2	50.3	48.4	50.1	50.5
<b>ISCED 5-8</b>	EU 28	73.7	72.8	71.7	71.3	71.6	73.1	74.2	75.4	75.9
	RO	74.1	73.1	69.8	68.7	67.0	75.9	77.0	80.9	81.3

Source:EUROSTAT, yth\_empl\_010

The percent of the young people neither in employment nor in education and training is decreasing in Romania after 2015, from 21.1% to 18% in 2018. Although, the percent is still one of the biggest 5 at the EU level, with 4% more than the EU average. (Table 7)

Table 7. Young people neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET rates)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>EU-28</b>	15.9	16.4	16.6	17.1	17.2	16.6	16.1	15.6	14.7	14.1
<b>RO</b>	16.2	19.2	20.0	20.1	20.5	20.0	21.1	20.8	18.7	18.0

Source:EUROSTAT, edat\_lfse\_20

## 2. Description of the social economy context in the country and the role of young people in it

### Overview

The concept of the social economy coexists alongside other concepts, such as the non-profit sector, third sector, civil society and social enterprises<sup>25</sup> (CIRIEC, 2017). In Romania there are various types of social economy entities: association and foundation, cooperatives (workers' cooperatives, consumers' cooperatives, agricultural cooperatives), mutuals (employees mutual aid associations, retirees mutual aid associations), commons, work integration social enterprises and limited liability companies with social objectives. The definition used for social economy entities started with 2007 was a wide one that comprises all types of organizations that satisfy some criteria: presence of social and economic objectives, nonprofit distribution constrains and democratic governance. Starting with 2015, there is a Social Economy Law that recognize as social enterprises all types of organizations that fulfill specific criteria (not only the general ones) and introduce a specific type of social enterprise, social insertion social enterprise.

The Romanian spectrum of social enterprises comprises: associations and foundations with economic activity, mutual aid associations, work integration social enterprises (sheltered workshops and social insertion enterprises) and cooperatives pursuing general interest.

Associations and foundations represent the most dynamic actor in the field of social enterprise development. They engage in economic activities to address social issues either directly or indirectly (by developing a separate limited liability companies in which they are the main shareholder). Their fields of activity include: delivery of services addressed to the general public (social services, care giving, education, environment protection, labour market services, culture, sport, tourism, fair trade, accounting, archiving, printing etc.) or even the production of goods (food, jewelleries, toys, textiles, decoration etc.). (European Commission, 2019) The number of associations and foundations that carry out economic activities has increased since 2010 up to 5,302 (meaning 12% of all active associations and foundations) with 13,117 employees (13% of associations and foundations employees). Associations and foundations' total incomes/revenues from economic activities have increased

<sup>25</sup> European Economic and Social Committee (2017). Recent evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union. By CIRIEC

between 2010 and 2015, in 2015 the average percentage of associations and foundations' incomes from economic activities being 29%<sup>26</sup>. (Table 8)

Mutuals work as incipient credit unions and provide small loans to their members and community, helping these people to cope with financial exclusion risks. There are two types of mutual aid associations: employees' mutual aid associations and retirees' mutual aid associations. If the employees mutual aid associations offer almost only financial services for their members, retirees' ones offer also social, health or cultural services for older people and communities. National Institute of Statistics data indicates that during 2000-2015 the number and employees of retirees' mutual aid associations nearly doubled, while the number of employees' mutual aid associations slightly decrease. (Table 8)

In Romania are two types of work integration social enterprise – sheltered workshops dedicated only to disabled people and social insertion enterprises centred on all types of vulnerable groups. According to the law on protection of people with disabilities, these types of social enterprises can be developed by companies, associations and foundations or public administration and at least 30% of their employees should be people with disabilities (Law 448/2006 on protection of people with disabilities). Sheltered workshops perform productive work, participate in commercial activities and also provide personal and social services for fully integrate their recipients in the open labor market and society. Their number increase in the period 2010 – 2015 with 30%, from 481 entities to 723 entities. (Table 8)

Social insertion enterprise is a new type of social enterprise introduced by the Law on Social Economy from 2015 that aims to integrate vulnerable people in the labour market, including people with disabilities and at least 30% of their employees should be vulnerable people. Only 12 work integration social enterprises (WISEs) aiming at social inclusion of disadvantage people were registered in the National Registry of Social Enterprise because of the too bureaucratic registration process and lack of the fiscal facilities or other assets dedicated exclusively to them<sup>27</sup>.

**Table 8. Social economy entities in Romania**

Associations&Foundations with economic activity	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Associations&Foundations with economic activity	2730	3832	4058	4468	4744	5302
Total Employees	12561	15038	16097	11272	12469	13117
Employees' Mutual Aid Associations	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Employees' Mutual Aid Associations	2737	2542	2569	2602	2502	2412
Total Employees	n.a.	3157	3163	3315	3426	3498
Retirees' Mutual Aid Associations	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Pensioners' Mutual Aid Associations	203	193	198	2013	218	219
Total Employees	1306	2176	2240	2412	2544	2450
Sheltered workops	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Sheltered workshops	481	330	564	667	691	723
Total Employees with disabilities	n.a.	n.a.	1690	1769	1733	1785
Workers' Cooperatives	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015

<sup>26</sup> European Commission (2019). Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe. Country report : Romania. Authors: Mihaela Lambru and Claudia Petrescu. Luxembourg: Publication Office of the European Union. Available at :

[https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?pager\\_offset=15&advSearchKey=social+enterprises+and+their+ecosystems+in+europe&mode=advancedSubmit&catId=22&doc\\_submit=&policyArea=0&policyAreaSub=0&country=0&year=0](https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?pager_offset=15&advSearchKey=social+enterprises+and+their+ecosystems+in+europe&mode=advancedSubmit&catId=22&doc_submit=&policyArea=0&policyAreaSub=0&country=0&year=0)

<sup>27</sup> National Registry of Social Enterprise, December 2018

Workers' cooperatives	857	836	846	n.a.	n.a.	885
Total employees	25109	23202	22082	n.a.	n.a.	17850
<b>Consumers' cooperatives</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Consumers' cooperatives	958	947	940	n.a.	n.a.	925
Total employees	958	947	940	n.a.	n.a.	5224
<b>Credit cooperatives</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Credit cooperatives	75	87	86	n.a.	n.a.	67
Total employees	2003	1858	2049	n.a.	n.a.	1937
<b>Agricultural cooperatives</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Agricultural cooperatives	127	275	356	n.a.	n.a.	426
Total employees	246	224	247	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Sources:

Association and foundations, Employees' Mutual Aid Associations and Retirees' Mutual Aid Association - CSDF, 2017. Romania 2017. Non-profit sector – profile, evolution and challenges; National Institute of Statistics, data processed by the Research Institute for Quality of Life (RIQL), 2013

Sheltered workshops - DPPH, 2011; ANPD, 2015; Alături de voi, 2014;

Cooperatives - National Institute of Statistics, data processed by the Research Institute for Quality of Life (RIQL), 2013 ; European Economic and Social Committee, 2017

Social enterprises' start-up has been funded between 2009-2015 through the Sectoral Operational Program Human Resources Development (SOP HDR) (Axis 6 – Social economy).. Through these funds, 1339 social enterprises have been set up that created 8332 jobs. Of these, 70% (933) were organized as limited liability companies, 22% (293) as associations and foundations, 6% (82) as cooperatives and 2% (26) as mutual aid associations. (**Error! Reference source not found.**) Taking into account the fact that social enterprises have been considered as forms of social inclusion (the axis that financed SEs' start up were dedicated to social inclusion of vulnerable groups), 74% (6148) of the new jobs created were for vulnerable persons (Roma people, disabled persons, NEETs, young people from the social protection system, unemployed, poor people, vulnerable women etc). 24% (2200) of the jobs created in these social enterprises were occupied by women in a vulnerable situation. The main issue is related to the sustainability of these jobs created by the SEs financed by SOP HDR.<sup>28</sup>

Table 9. Social enterprises' startups financed through SOP HDR, POSDRU 2009-2015

Regional intermediary body who managed the implementation	Social enterprises number	Jobs number	Forma de organizare				
			Limited liability companies	Coops	Assoc& Foundations	Mutual aid associations	Others
South East	251	1481	195	4	49		3
South West	175	1196	106	54	15		
South Muntenia	340	2005	241	4	95		
Bucharest-Ilfov	67	399	49	8	10		
Nord West	250	1767	180	4	64		2
Centre	256	1484	162	8	60	26	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1339</b>	<b>8332</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>5</b>

Source: Center for Non-profit Legislation, 2019. Data from Ministry of European Funds, General Direction European Programs Human Capital, 2018, Data received according to the document 36332/23.05.2018; Petrescu, 2019

<sup>28</sup> Petrescu, C. (2019). Contracte rezervate. Provocari, tendinte, oportunitati, Centrul pentru Legislatie Nonprofit. Available at: <https://www.clnr.ro/raport-achizitii-rezervate-provocari-tendinte-oportunitati/>



## Analysis

All the interviews with the young entrepreneurs and the aspiring entrepreneurs can be found in Annex II: Meeting the young people in Romania.

### 1. Competences: which competences a young need to become a young entrepreneur?

In Romania, like in other EU countries, to become entrepreneur at a young age is a very challenging issue taking into consideration all the competencies required – from innovation, creativity, vision to financial and management knowledge and abilities. If we discuss about social entrepreneur, it can be observed that to the initial challenges are added some specific ones. The specific ones refer to the main characteristics of a social business: duality of economic and social objective, limited profit distribution and democratic governance.

All social entrepreneurs interviewed consider that the most important competences needed at the beginning of the business development are vision, creativity, perseverance and capacity to adapt. Vision is important because it remains the basis of the business and is the core of the whole enterprise. To develop this vision into a business idea requires creativity and innovation to identify the niches that can be covered by the business. Also, innovation is required to develop new ways/instruments to respond to the customers'/market's needs. All of the social entrepreneurs consider that they innovate in their field of activity:

- Issue Monitoring developed the first service for monitoring public policy decision
- Green Knot (Nod Verde) created the first food hub in Transylvania region of Romania
- Illuminis developed an integrated service for interior design (from planning to execution, with personalized furniture, innovative lighting products)
- Close to You developed first UtilDeco - an insertion unit that offers archiving and document storage, the production of protection equipment and an online store, then Job Direct - a unit that offers services of evaluation, testing, counselling, professional capacity building, mediation and placement on the labour market, as well as job coaching for people with disabilities or from groups at risk and at the end WiseTravel – a unit that offers travel services and event organizing, while 50% of its profit is donated to NGOs and social enterprises

Social entrepreneurs had the technical competences in the field of activity of their enterprises. All admitted that a very well knowledge of the field is required to have a successful business. These technical competences are necessary for the idea development and services/products designing. In the same time, good knowledge of the field implies also a learning process from previous experience and transformation of the needs in opportunities for new services/products. This learning through experience process was present in the case of all social entrepreneurs in the stage of business development, but also after the implementation when they realised that need to change or improve the initial idea.

To implement the business idea, a lot of perseverance is needed from the entrepreneurs because a lot of bureaucratic issues must be met, a number of problems can arise along with the human resources involved, suppliers, customers, material resources and also changes to some elements of the original business plan may be required. In Romania, the multiple changes in the socio-economic context or of the fiscal framework requires a good resilience of the entrepreneurs, but also a higher capacity to adapt to the new fiscal procedures/rules or economic environment.

After the beginning of the business, all the social entrepreneurs consider that they needed financial and economic competences. Some of them consider that the level of financial and economic competences should be more than medium because of the Romanian economic context and specificities. Financial and economic competences required imply:

- financial management on short, medium and long term in order to estimate the cash flow needs and periods with financial breakdown
- fiscal information to know all the requirements of the law
- sales skills to be able to convince customers of the quality of the products / services
- negotiation skills with clients, employees and suppliers
- marketing skills to promote the products/services

According to the competences included in JRC Policy Report called EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework<sup>29</sup> (JRC, 2016), the Romanian social entrepreneurs consider that all the competences mentioned/comprised in The Entrepreneurship Competences Framework are important for an entrepreneur, but for a social entrepreneur the most important competences are, depending on the level of the business development:

- From Ideas and opportunities area: creativity, ethical and sustainable thinking, valuing ideas
- From Resources area: motivation and perseverance, mobilizing resources, financial and economic literacy
- From Into-action area: coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk, learning through experience, planning and management

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<sup>29</sup> JRC. (2016). EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship (Margherita Bacigalupo, Panagiotis Kampylis). <http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC101581/Ifna27939enn.pdf>

	Competence	Reason	Generally, are these competences acquired by aspiring entrepreneurs?
<b>Ideas and opportunities</b>	Creativity	To develop a sustainable business, the entrepreneur should identify a niche area or propose a new or improved product/service. In social entrepreneurship the need for social innovation is higher because this type of business is more provocative. To deal with the duality of economic and social objectives, keep the ethical and social values and have economic success need more creativity from an entrepreneur.	YES
	Ethical and sustainable thinking	Social entrepreneurship should accomplish both economic and social objectives/values. To fulfil social objectives, ethical thinking is very important.	YES
	Valuing ideas	Social entrepreneur is, in the same time, a social innovator in a specific area. The business idea should be analysed in social and economic terms. Taking into account that the development of a social business implies more responsibilities and has a higher risk of failure, the initiator must have a vision of what is needed in the market and how this need can be met in an innovative way.	YES
<b>Resources</b>	Motivation and perseverance	The development of a social business should be a long term project. In Romania, even if there were and are important funds for start-up of social enterprises, there weren't & aren't funds for the development of this type of enterprise after the incubation period. In the same time, the social objectives imply more responsibilities for entrepreneur and sometimes is very difficult to develop such a business. When are social business that make also social integration for vulnerable groups, the entrepreneur need more motivation and perseverance to deal with all the problems.	Not always
	Mobilizing resources	In each business is important the entrepreneur has the capacity to mobilize the resources (human resources, financial resources, time, infrastructure etc). To have a	Not always

		successful business is important to have a good capacity for mobilizing resources.	
	Financial and economic literacy	Romanian social entrepreneurs consider that the financial and economic literacy are extremely important for start-up and also for the development of the business. All of them should learn a lot of financial and economic information and develop their competences in this area: financial planning, marketing, product/service sales, communication, contracting, economic negotiation etc.	Not always
Into action	Coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk	In a political, fiscal, economic context characterized by a lot of uncertainty and ambiguity, with a lot of changes of the fiscal framework, Romanian social entrepreneurs should have the capacity to cope with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk. Those who develop the social enterprise as an economic activity of an NGO should change the juridical form of organization and became an limited liability company.	Not always
	Learning through experience	Experience is the most important “trainer/teacher” for social entrepreneurs. The characteristics of social business, make them be more provocative for the entrepreneurs. How to combine economic and social objectives, how to ensure a participative governance, how to deal with all the fiscal and economic challenges are aspects that can be learned mainly through experience.	Not always
	Planning and management	Planning and management are one of the core competences of every entrepreneur. For Romanian social entrepreneurs, the planning and management competence seems to be crucial for the survival and development of the social business. This competence includes: the capacity to set up short-term, medium-term and long-term objectives and develop action plans to achieve them, the capacity to organize all the activity based on the priorities set-up and to adapt at all the changes in the fiscal and economic framework. The financial planning, the human resources management, the priorities set-up are considered to be most important by social entrepreneurs.	Not always



## 2. Gaps: what misses in order to allow young to become social entrepreneurs?

### a. What tools do young people have to become an entrepreneur: you have to describe what is already there and why these tools are helpful in the creation of a social enterprise?



The institutional framework that support social entrepreneurship in Romania includes:

- legislative framework on social economy that recognize and define social enterprise and social insertion enterprise – this legislative framework doesn't comprise financial benefits for social enterprises;
- public funds for social enterprise start-up – specific European funds for social enterprises start-up dedicated for social inclusion of vulnerable groups, European funds for enterprises start-up (could be any type of enterprise), national fund for enterprises start-up (Start-up Nation) (could be any type of enterprise);
- private funds for social entrepreneurship start-up – these funds decrease in the last 5 years in Romania;
- technical support for social enterprise start-up – in the projects financed through EU funds they offer also technical support for creation of social enterprise for 1-2 years
- public funds for the development of enterprises (including social enterprises if their legal status is limited liability company/cooperatives, so if they could be defined as small and medium enterprise) – these are EU funds;

During the last 10 years there were some mentoring programmes for social entrepreneurs in Romania, most of them developed by the private entities – companies and NGOs. One of the most successful mentorship programme was developed by NESST – an incubator for social business that offer them training and mentorship during the development. In the agricultural area, Romanian American Foundation develop a programme that support the creation and development of social enterprises.

In the last years, Impact Hub offers a mentorship programme for social entrepreneurs with an online platform that offer information in different areas and can guide the young people to develop a business ([www.startarium.ro](http://www.startarium.ro)).

### b. What is missing: you have to describe the tools that are missing and that your people would need to become a young entrepreneur.

Most of the tools that are useful in the creation of a social enterprise are dedicated for start-up, not for the development of social enterprises. Taking into account that after 1 year the social enterprise should be economically viable and sustainable, this is very difficult in the context of missing financial instruments (mainly access to credits) or mentorship programmes for social enterprises. The Romanian young social entrepreneurs declare that they could not find financial support for the business development. Because the financial support for NGOs with economic activities is missing in Romania

(no bank offers credits for NGOs), those who were NGOs choose to change their legal status and became limited liability companies.

### 3. Opportunities: what opportunities does a young entrepreneur has?

Even if Romania has legislation regarding social enterprises, the concept is still quite unknown among young people. Most of young people become entrepreneurs and intend to have a social component of their business, but only few really develop social enterprises that fulfil the requirements of such an enterprise. Many of them consider that if they employ people from vulnerable groups or make some charitable activities, their business could be a social one. It is the beginning for a social business but could not be considered a social entrepreneur. That's why is very important to increase knowledge in the field of social entrepreneurship and social enterprises among young people.

Taking into account that there are a lot of EU funds for social enterprise start-up or enterprise start-up, can be considered that there are a lot of opportunities for the creation of social enterprises. Young people are encouraged to develop their own social enterprises or enterprises with social mission. These social enterprises could be created in any fields of activity.

Most of the social entrepreneurs that have a sustainable business consider that not the economic benefits were important for them at the beginning. They wanted to solve a social problem they perceived in their communities or a problem of the target group (people or NGOs) they worked with in various activities and these were the main drive factors for start a social enterprise. For all the social entrepreneurs the most important advantage is the social one because they consider that if they succeed to accomplish their social mission and offer something good to their communities this implies that their business has profit and works well. Although their enterprises are small and medium one, but they consider that are sustainable and improve the quality of life of the society/community through their services/activities.



## Background

### 1. Description of the economic and social context in the country

In 2018, Belgium population reached 11 376 070 million inhabitants residing in four regions: 57.6% in Flanders, 31.9% in Wallonia, 10.5% in the Brussels-Capital Region and less than 1% in the municipalities of the German-speaking community<sup>30</sup>. The population traditionally consists of slightly more women (51% or 5 778 164 people) than men (49% or 5 597 906 people). The population has experienced an annual growth of 0.50%, primarily attributable to net international migration.

Although the number of young people (<18 years) increased, to 2.301 million or 20.2% of the population, Belgium is affected by the ‘ageing of the population’. Indeed, there are almost 2.13 million people aged 65 or over, representing 18.7% of the population<sup>31</sup>.

The ‘working age’ population (aged between 18 and 64) represent 61% of the population and 68.5% of them are in work, while 7.1% of the active population is looking for work. The inactive population is mainly composed of young people (students) and older people (early retirees and retirees). There are, however, major differences between the regions in Belgium. Flanders has the highest level of employment and the lowest unemployment rate. Compare to the European Union, Belgium has lower employment level (active employees in the EU is 72.2%) but higher-level regarding unemployment (706% in EU against 7.1% in Belgium)<sup>32</sup>. The principal sector with the highest number of workers in Belgium is the tertiary sector (services), mostly in transport, commerce and HoReCa (hotels, restaurants and catering).

Although the high level of employment, Belgium is among the EU Member States with the highest income gap between persons with a low and a high educational attainment level<sup>33</sup> (Eurostat, 2018). There is a significant poverty risk for persons with low educational attainment increasing from 18.7% in 2005 to 31.2% in 2017<sup>34</sup>.

Regarding the youth, in 2017, 17% of 25-34 year-olds had not attained upper secondary education in Belgium, compared to 15% on average across OECD countries<sup>35</sup> and 12.1% are not in employment, education or training – NEET and probably being active job seekers, travelling or engaging in other activities (personal project, self-training, etc.), but others backed out of education or jobs.

<sup>30</sup> [European Commission](#)

<sup>31</sup> [European Commission](#)

<sup>32</sup> [European Commission](#)

<sup>33</sup> Eurostat, 2018

<sup>34</sup> [Social Security Belgium](#)

<sup>35</sup> [GPS Education](#)

On the contrary, over 50% of 20-year-olds were enrolled in tertiary education in 2016, which is above the OECD average of 39%<sup>36</sup>. Although Belgium has good overall education performance, high educational inequalities exist<sup>37</sup>. Children with a disadvantaged background including those with a migrant background do not have equal opportunities to access quality education. The proportion of graduates in science, technology and mathematics is one of the lowest in the EU.

When they enter the labour market, 19.3% of young people don't have a work, which is slightly higher than the EU average (16.8%)<sup>38</sup>. Young people with no qualifications have even less chance to find work compared to young people with secondary or higher qualifications. Despite this, the unemployment level of Belgium youth decreased from 7.3% in 2013 to 4.7% in 2018 compared to 10 to 6.3 in EU while the employment level increased from 41.4% to 43.4<sup>39</sup>.

Overall, Belgium economic environment and employment growth provide opportunities regarding labour market participation and competitiveness. Between 2018 and 2019 Belgium's economic growth is projected to accelerate, progressing to an average annual pace of 1.8 %. This compares with an average growth of 1.4 % between 2014 and 2016. In general, Belgians are more satisfied with their lives than the OECD average and rate their general satisfaction with a 6.9 grade on average, higher than the OECD average of 6.5<sup>40</sup>. This satisfaction level could be explained by the facts that Belgium ranks above the average in work-life balance, income and wealth, civic engagement, education and skills, subjective well-being, jobs and earnings, health status, housing, social connections, and personal security.

What is the impact of the economic environment on entrepreneurship? Belgium ranks among the poorest performers in the EU on entrepreneurship in particular because of heavy administrative burden weighs on businesses and digitisation of public services, including courts<sup>41</sup>. Although several policy measures have been adopted in recent years to foster entrepreneurship, start-ups or businesses without a mature balance sheet have difficulty accessing traditional bank financing. The proportion of early-stage entrepreneurial activity has increased to 6.2 % but remains below the average of advanced economies (8.4 %). Crucially, Belgian entrepreneurs appear much less driven by opportunity than those in other advanced economies<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> [GPS Education](#)

<sup>37</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european-semester-country-report-belgium-en.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> European Commission

<sup>39</sup> Statbel

<sup>40</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european-semester-country-report-belgium-en.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european-semester-country-report-belgium-en.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european-semester-country-report-belgium-en.pdf>

## 2. Description of the social economy context in the country and the role of young people in it

### Overview

Belgium has a very specific and unique political asset. This is why the definition of social enterprise slightly changes from region to region. In fact, there is not a real consensus in Belgium as to what constitutes a social enterprise and, more precisely, where the boundaries should be placed around this notion.<sup>43</sup>

The definition of social enterprises changes from the regions:

➔ In Wallonia and Brussels

In Wallonia and Brussels, a social enterprise is defined as the more entrepreneurial subset of the social economy, or as a synonym for the social economy. It is seen as any economic activity developed by associations, cooperatives, mutuals, SFS (société à finalité sociale) and foundations and which not aims for profit maximisation.<sup>44</sup>

➔ In the Flanders

‘Social enterprise-social entrepreneurship’ and ‘social economy’ are not used as synonyms. Indeed, social economy is legally defined as a set of ‘social entrepreneurial values’ developed within various organisational forms and activity sectors. Social economy appears as one sub-set of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship in Flanders.<sup>45</sup>

We can identify three ideal types of social enterprise in Belgium:<sup>46</sup>

<b>Ideal type</b>	<b>Model 1: Entrepreneurial approach to general interest</b>	<b>Model 2: Combining mutual and general interest</b>	<b>Model 3: Combining private and general interest</b>
Underlying dynamics	General interest	Mutual interest + general interest	Private interest + general interest
Social aim	Inherent in the statutes	Either present from start or added to mutual interest	Variable; Challenge of social aim demonstration and prioritization
Economic dimension	Under certain conditions (e.g. >25% market resources)	OK	OK
Participatory governance	Democracy OK Challenge of participation	Democracy OK Participation OK (members = beneficiaries)	Democracy and participation not inherent in this model

<sup>43</sup> European Commission, Social enterprises and their eco-systems: A European mapping report. Updated country report: Belgium, 2016

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.econosoc.be/>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.socialeconomie.be>

<sup>46</sup> The table if from European Commission, Social enterprises and their eco-systems: A European mapping report. Updated country report: Belgium, 2016

	(members ≠ beneficiaries)		
Privileged organisational vehicle	Non-profit, foundation or company with social purpose	Cooperative, mutual or company with social purpose	Various (incl. business and independent worker)
Main resources	Public subsidies with growing public and private contracts	Mixed incomes	Mixed incomes
Boundary line	Economic dimension	Social dimension (general interest)	Social dimension & democratic/participatory governance

Most of the Belgian social enterprises operate as associations. Less numerous, but still with a high relevance, are foundations, mutuels, cooperatives and ‘social purpose companies’ – the latter two categories often being combined with each other.<sup>47</sup>

**Table 4: Social enterprise statistics in Belgium (2014)**

<b>Number of social enterprises</b>	<b>18 074</b>
<i>Growth since 2008</i>	+2.2 %
<b>Number of workers (FTEs)</b>	<b>371 478</b>
<i>Growth since 2008</i>	+11.5 %
- Associations (90.1 %)	334 945
- Foundations (2.4 %)	8 922
- Cooperatives and/or social purpose companies (3.8 %)	14 126
- Mutuels (3.6 %)	13 383

Source: European Commission, *Social enterprises and their eco-systems: A European mapping report. Updated country report: Belgium, 2016*

We find social economy enterprises in many sectors of activity, however they are mainly active in the "other service activities" (28%), "health" and and social action "(25%) and" arts, entertainment and recreation "(15%).<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> European Commission, *Social enterprises and their eco-systems: A European mapping report. Updated country report: Belgium, 2016*

<sup>48</sup> Observatoire de l'économie sociale, *Les cahiers de l'Observatoire (Numéro 14)*, 2018. [http://www.observatoire-es.be/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/OES\\_LesCahiers14\\_WEB\\_pg.pdf](http://www.observatoire-es.be/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/OES_LesCahiers14_WEB_pg.pdf) Please note that this data concerns only the Wallonie and the Bruxelles Capitale region.

Sections		Wallonie	Bruxelles	Total en 2016
A	Agriculture, Sylviculture et Pêche	100	2	102
C	Industries manufacturières	36	2	38
D	Production et distribution électricité, gaz, vapeur et air conditionné	2		2
E	Prod. et distrib. eau - assainissement, gestion déchets et dépollution	23	1	24
F	Construction	30	7	37
G	Commerce de gros et de détail - réparation d'auto et moto	93	21	114
H	Transports et entreposages	19	9	28
I	Hébergement et restauration	99	47	146
J	Information et communication	60	89	149
K	Activités financières et assurances	17	31	48
L	Activités immobilières	56	36	92
M	Activités spécialisées, scientifiques et techniques	211	227	438
N	Activités de services administratifs et de soutien	232	95	327
O	Administration publique et défense - sécurité sociale obligatoire	41	52	93
P	Education et enseignement (hors enseignement obligatoire)	404	325	729
Q	Santé humaine et action sociale	1 787	944	2 731
Q- ETA	Entreprises de Travail Adapté ETA	54	12	66
Q AFT/OISP- CISP	Insertion socio-professionnelle AFT/OISP - CISP	139	59	198
R	Arts, spectacles et activités récréatives	1 057	613	1 670
S	Autres activités de services	1 291	1 879	3 170
T	Activités des ménages comme employeurs ou producteurs de biens et services pour usage propre	4	1	5
TS	Activités titres-servives	214	22	236
U	Activités des organismes extra-territoriaux	1	8	9
<b>SOUS-TOTAL</b>		<b>5 970</b>	<b>4 482</b>	<b>10 452</b>
PEns	Enseignement obligatoire	532	182	714
OHop	Hôpitaux	36	21	57
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6 538</b>	<b>4 685</b>	<b>11 223</b>

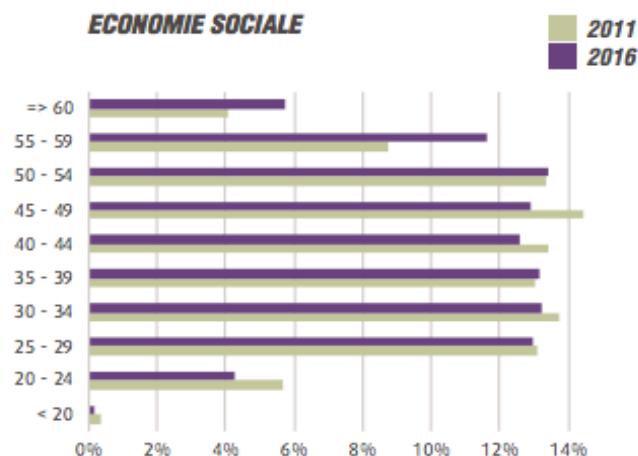
Source: Observatoire de l'économie sociale, Les cahiers de l'Observatoire (Numéro 14), 2018.

### The role of young people

As you can see from the graphic below, the percentage of people for the following ages, in 2016, are:

- ➔ Less than 20 y.o.: around 0,2%
- ➔ Between 20-24 y.o.: around 4,2%
- ➔ Between 25-29 y.o.: around 13%
- ➔ Between 30-34 y.o.: around 13,2%

Therefore, the young people (18-35) working in the field of social economy in Belgium is the sum of these number, which is around 30,6 %. This number is encouraging, because it shows that almost one third of the people working in this field are young.



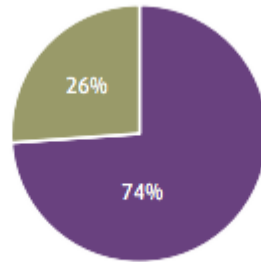
Source: Observatoire de l'économie sociale, Les cahiers de l'Observatoire (Numéro 14), 2018.

## The presence of women...

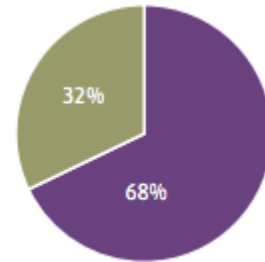
In the social economy sector in Belgium, as you can see for the graphics below, more than two thirds of the jobs are held by women.

### DANS L'ÉCONOMIE SOCIALE

■ Hommes  
■ Femmes

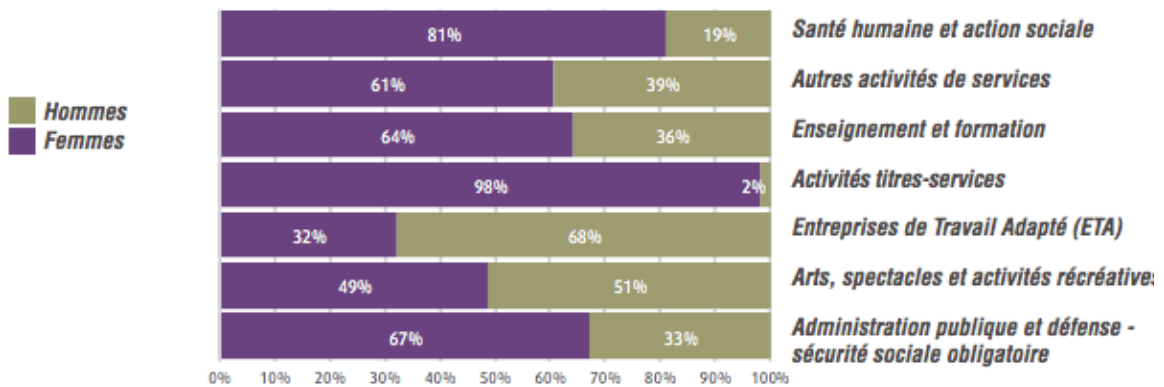


Wallonie



RBC

However, as you can see from this second table presented below, not all fields of activity in which social enterprises are active are characterized by the predominance of female employment, nor to the same extent. Women are widely represented in the sectors of "human health and social action" (81%), "Other service activities" (61%), "Education and training" (64%), and "Public administration - Compulsory social security" (67%). However, in the field of "arts, entertainment and recreation", the presence of men and women is almost the same and in the "adapted companies" sector, men are the majority (68%).



Source: Observatoire de l'économie sociale, Les cahiers de l'Observatoire (Numéro 14), 2018.





## Analysis

The interviews with the young entrepreneurs and the aspiring entrepreneurs can be found in Annex III. Meeting the young people in Belgium.

### 1. Competences: which competences a young need to become a young entrepreneur?

As it happens in many countries, to become an entrepreneur and create an enterprise is a challenge in Belgium as well; especially when it comes to the creation of a social enterprise and if the entrepreneurs is a young person. The entrepreneurs have to face several uncertainties at the beginning of the adventure. Plus, Belgium has some intrinsically difficulties for the creation of a social enterprise by a young person: mainly the fact that Belgium has different legislatives backgrounds varying from the geographic location (the laws ruling and affecting the social economy sector are different in the Flanders, in Wallonia and in the region of Brussels). These plurality of bureaucracy as well as the difficulty to understand which legal status is needed, are two great challenges for a young social entrepreneur alongside with the funding of the enterprise.

However, in Belgium the social economy sector is widely developed and many tools (as we will analyse in the following section) exist to support and promote the development of the sector and the creation of new social enterprises. Social economy is generally known among the citizens and many persons are familiar with social enterprises and are used to get in touch and consume in this sector.

These particularities that characterise the Belgium landscape influence the competences that a young Belgian social entrepreneur needs to create its social enterprise and the ones that normally are already acquired by them.

Young social entrepreneurs must have a vision, and a clear idea of what they wish to do: an idea is not enough, they need to have the global view of their enterprise, the consequences that it may have on the community and the future of it. Moreover, all the persons interviewed underlined the importance of ethical and sustainable thinking: Belgium is a country that pay a lot of attention on this aspect. A lot of the enterprises created by the social entrepreneurs interviewed, of the ideas of the inspiring entrepreneurs have a special focus on sustainability and in particular, ecology and the reduction of waste. Plus, since Belgium is country where there are already many tools for the support and development of the social economy enterprises, a competence that is essential is to spot the right opportunities to develop its own idea.

Moreover, many of the social entrepreneurs and of the aspiring one already have past work experience and relevant studies, this allow them to already have many of the skills and competences needed to become an entrepreneurs and to know well their field of activity. The harder part and the skills to develop that may miss are mobilising resources, keep up the motivation, financial and economic literacy, planning and management, coping with risk and ambiguity and work with others.

To summarize, according to the interviews that we made to young social entrepreneurs and to aspiring social entrepreneurs, the competences that a young person needs to create its social enterprise are the following ones:

- From “Ideas and opportunities”: spotting opportunities, vision and ethical and sustainable thinking
- From “Resources”: mobilising resources, motivation and perseverance and financial and economic literacy.
- From “Into action”: planning and management, coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk and working with others.

	<b>Competence</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Generally, are these competences acquired by aspiring entrepreneurs?</b>
<b>Ideas and opportunities</b>	<b>Spotting opportunities</b>	All the entrepreneurs agree on the fact that young people should be able to spot opportunities. This means that having a good idea is not enough anymore, they should also understand how to develop at best and to see is responding at best at a need.	YES
	<b>Vision</b>	To create a social enterprise young entrepreneur should have a clear vision of what they want to create. Not only of the product/service they will provide but also to the consequences and changes this will have on their society and on their community, as well as how it can evolve in the future.	YES
	<b>Ethical and sustainable thinking</b>	A young social entrepreneur must have an ethical and sustainable thinking, this should be at the base of their idea of enterprise.	YES
<b>Resources</b>	<b>Mobilising resources</b>	To create, implement and manage their social enterprise, young entrepreneurs should be able to mobilise resources of different nature: This should be done permanently during the life of the social enterprise. To understand which are the right tools and resources for each social enterprise is crucial for every entrepreneur.	Not always
	<b>Motivation and perseverance</b>	The process of creating and managing a social enterprise, especially at the beginning of the process can be very challenging, especially for a person that didn't have experience in this field before. This is why it is important to keep the motivation and perseverance.	Not always

	<b>Financial and economic literacy</b>	To start and develop a successful social enterprise it is crucial to have financial and economic literacy or to have the support of someone that has this competence. It is of the milestones to build a successful and sustainable social enterprise.	Not always
<b>Into action</b>	<b>Planning and management</b>	Both the entrepreneurs and the aspiring entrepreneurs agree on the fact that to be able to planify and manage the activities of the social enterprise is the key of success and sustainability of the enterprise. This means be able to plan all the aspect of the life of the enterprise.	Not always
	<b>Coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk</b>	Unexpected situations and risks can always happen in a life of a social enterprise, this is why the young social entrepreneurs should be ready in advance to cope with them, and see them as an opportunity of improvement. It is crucial to have this competence in order to avoid the loss of motivation and continuing the activities of the enterprise.	Not always
	<b>Working with others</b>	A social entrepreneur should be able to work with other people within and out of its team (clients, network, subcontractors, etc.). To build a successful and sustainable social enterprise is possible only thank to teamwork. Plus, keep learning from others is the best way to keep the innovation as a running factor of the social enterprise.	Not always

## 2. Gaps: what misses in order to allow young to become social entrepreneurs?

### a. What tools do young people have to become an entrepreneur?

With our study we have mainly analysed the French part of Belgium and the city of Brussels. Thanks to our interviews, we have understood that what a young person wishing to open a social enterprise needs the most are mentoring/coaching programs and concrete support during the launching phase of the enterprise.

According to the people that we have interviewed, the main tools to support young people in the creation of social enterprises are the following:

- The [1819](#): it is a free public service of the region of Brussels. It is a unique information point for anyone who wants to start, expand or develop their business in Brussels in a professional way and who seeks information and help to do so.
- [Coopcicity](#): Through its various support and training programs, Coopcicity helps project sponsors to set up their projects and also supports existing social enterprises in the development of their activities. It aims to inform, educate and inspire future entrepreneurs on social entrepreneurship in Brussels. This organisation wants to instil another vision of the economy.
- [Déclíc en perspective](#): Déclíc en Perspectives' mission is to stimulate the capacity to act and position itself as a propeller of collective projects, committed and registered in the principles of the social economy. The association offers, through various training canvas, to accompany these people who want to get started, but who still have to find or test their project idea and / or have not yet dared to take the first step. Their approach promotes the development of a critical spirit and is based on the use of tools of collective intelligence and structuring of ideas.
- [Smart](#): Smart offers an original solution to create salaried employment as well as an offer of shared services in many areas: legal, financial, administrative, training, economic support, shared workspaces. Specifically, Smart offers advice, training and tools (administrative, legal, tax and financial) to support the development of the professional activity of self-employee. With Smart, self-employed workers manage their activities and bill their benefits independently. They find their customers, decide how much to bill and have autonomy of action. In the eyes of their clients, they act like any independent worker.
- [Credal](#): Crédal is a cooperative whose purpose is to promote a more just and supportive society, particularly with regard to the use of money. Crédal proposes, in Belgium ethical investment, alternative credit and project support.
- [Group One](#): Group One is an organisation whose mission is to facilitate the transition to a sustainable economy. It aims to help everyone to reveal their potential to take action and create the job of their dreams: every entrepreneur should be able to become an incredible lever of change towards a sustainable economy. Their objective is for young people to develop new skills, human and entrepreneurial, because they are the entrepreneurs of tomorrow.
- [Village partenaire](#): the Village Partenaire provides contractors with offices and a range of services that make life easier for the company. The mission of the Village is to provide the best possible conditions of viability to projects carried by entrepreneurs the launch phase.

It is also important to underline, that after our interviews, we have understood that many of the aspiring entrepreneurs not only already have relevant professional experience in the same field or another, but they are also familiar with the world of the social economy and social entrepreneurship.

**b. Which are the tools that are missing, and that young people would need to become entrepreneurs?**

Overall in Belgium there are a lot of tools available for the creation of a social enterprise by a young person. The problem is that it is very hard for a young person which does not have any precedent experience in the field of entrepreneurship and/or social economy, to find these tools and to understand which one is the right one. In fact, the tool that an aspiring entrepreneur might change according to the idea that he/she has, is/her background and the stage of development of the social

enterprise. Plus, the Belgian landscape is particularly complicated due to the heterogeneous nature of this country: there are different levels of administration and divisions according to the language. This is why public and private support services vary. Therefore, a general database of support tools could be the answer to this.

On top of that, what young aspiring entrepreneurs need the most are financial and juridical support as well as funding tools or, as one of the entrepreneurs suggested, more tax exemptions. In general, young entrepreneurs would need general counselling on these aspects and this counselling/mentoring program should be long term and not just few months.

### 3. Opportunities: what opportunities does a young entrepreneur has?

#### a. What opportunities does the territory/country/cities offer to young people and stimulate them to become young entrepreneurs?

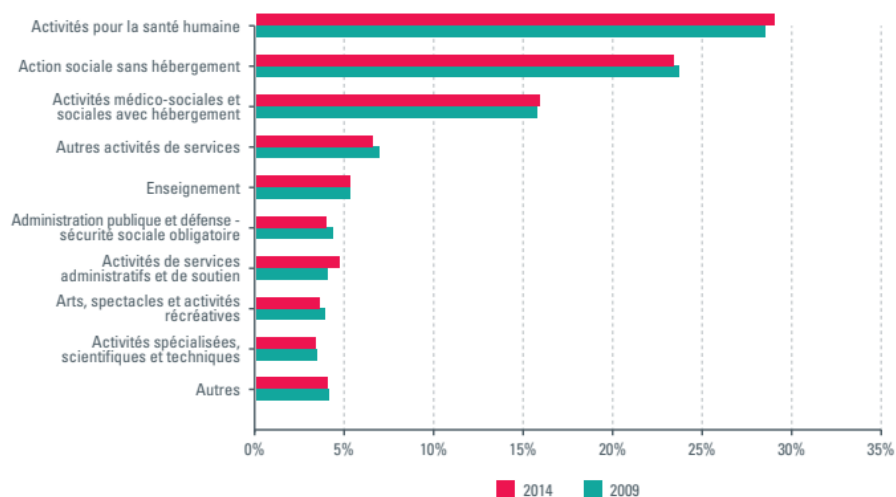
In Brussels, and in general in Belgium, there is a growing awareness raising around the topic of social and sustainable economy. More and more, enterprises and service are created in this framework, and therefore support tools as well. A change of mentality is happening, and more and more people are adapting their way of living and consuming.

In this framework, many tools as well as public support are available for young people to create and develop their own social enterprise, if they look for them and have the perseverance that these needs.

#### b. In which fields are there more opportunities for the creation of a social enterprise?

##### Q6 - DANS QUELS SECTEURS D'ACTIVITÉS LES ENTREPRISES SOCIALES OPÈRENT-ELLES ?

Figure 6. Répartition sectorielle de l'emploi salarié (ETP) des entreprises sociales en Belgique – 2009 et 2014 (données ConcertES)



Source: Académie des entrepreneurs sociaux, Baromètre des entreprises sociales en Belgique

<sup>49</sup> Académie des entrepreneurs sociaux, Baromètre des entreprises sociales en Belgique, 2016, p.31 [http://www.ces.uliege.be/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Baromètre2016AES\\_PUBLI.pdf](http://www.ces.uliege.be/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Baromètre2016AES_PUBLI.pdf)

One of the most interesting things about social enterprises is that they are active in multiple sectors and they sell very different products and/or services. An evidence of this diversity is the different ideas of all the people that we have interviewed for this report: each of them had a unique idea very different from one another.

Despite that, according to statistics, social enterprise in Belgium mainly provide services/products in the field of social and health care, education, administration and culture.

**c. What opportunities young entrepreneurs and their social business could offer to their community?**

The benefits of the creation of a social enterprise by a young person for its local community are multiple.

First of all, social enterprises offer to the community where they are establishing a new kind of product and/or service, which is the result of a sustainable and responsible process, which takes in consideration the wellness of the society and the environment.

By offering this kind of products, these social entrepreneurs not only provide the community with a high-quality service, but they also educate it and spread awareness about a new way of consuming, which is more sustainable and responsible. They educate young people and adults to new values, and by doing so they hopefully also have an influence on the community way of thinking, consuming and living.

They also introduce in the community a new way of producing, a new economic model: the reality of social enterprises, and all the world related to the social economy. Spreading awareness about this kind of economic model and way of producing, as well as all the benefits related to it, other people /realities/enterprises may think about doing the same. This would have a great impact on the community, from an economic and social point of view.

Moreover, the creation of new enterprises by young people not only has a positive economic impact, by creating employment and generating wellness, but it also gives an empowering image of young people, especially in complicated social and economic contexts.

**d. What are the advantages of becoming a young entrepreneur?**

First of all, by becoming an entrepreneur young people become self-employed and provide a job to themselves. Most of the time this comes with a sense of self-empowerment and personal satisfaction that gives them even more motivation to continue down this road. On top of that, by turning their idea into reality not only they provide themselves and other people with an employment, but they also have the chance to create something that reflects their values. This means that they combine their working life with personal aspirations and motivations.

Moreover, it is not just a personal motivation that drives these young entrepreneurs but also the will to spread awareness about a new way of producing and living and the willingness to give back to their community. As mentioned above, these young entrepreneurs wish to spread awareness about a more sustainable, fair and long lasting way of producing, consuming and living and about many other important topics. Plus, they want to create new opportunities and offer new products and services to the people of the community they live in.



## Conclusions: Young Social Entrepreneur Competences profile

The goal of this document was to understand, thanks to the analysis of the EU landscape of social economy and a detailed study of three countries – Italy, Romania and Belgium -, to understand which competences a young needs to create its social enterprise, and therefore to draw a common Young social entrepreneur competences profile.

As it has been studied this document, the European landscape of social economy presents several differences among its member states, as it has been also confirmed with the analysis of our three countries: Italy, Romania and Belgium. Indeed, in Italy there is a long-lasting tradition of social economy, but there are a lack of tools to help young people (or people in general) to create new social enterprises. In Romania, the field of social economy is rising, alongside the interest of citizens for it, and new tools for the creation of social enterprise are being developed as well. In Belgium, the social economy sector is well developed and there are several tools for that promote and support the creation of new social enterprises by young persons. However to find the right tools in the different legislative landscape and the peculiar Belgian administrative divided framework can be a problem.

However, when looking for the young social entrepreneur competences profile for each country (meaning which competences a young needs to open its social enterprise) created thanks to the interviews carried by the partners, despite the differences and particularities of each countries, we have seen some common points.

Taking as basis the EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework, a Young social entrepreneur competences profile has been drawn. These are the competences that a young person would need if he/she wishes to create a social enterprise:

- Vision
- Ethical and sustainable thinking
- Creativity
- Motivation and perseverance
- Mobilising resources
- Financial and economic literacy
- Planning and management
- Coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk
- Learning through experience
- Working with others.

Please note, that this is an ideal framework, several young entrepreneurs have created their enterprises without having all of these, but working with other people that had the ones they missed and developing these ones with time.

	Competences for Italy	Competences for Romania	Competences for Belgium	Young social entrepreneur competences profile
Ideas and opportunities	Vision	Valuing ideas	Vision	Vision
	Ethical and sustainable thinking	Ethical and sustainable thinking	Ethical and sustainable thinking	Ethical and sustainable thinking
	Creativity	Creativity	Spotting opportunities	Creativity
Resources	Motivation and perseverance	Motivation and perseverance	Motivation and perseverance	Motivation and perseverance
	Self-awareness & self-efficacy	Mobilizing resources	Mobilising resources	Mobilising resources
	Financial and economic literacy	Financial and economic literacy	Financial and economic literacy	Financial and economic literacy
Into action	Planning and management	Planning and management	Planning and management	Planning and management
	Working with others	Coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk	Coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk	Coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk
	Learning through experience	Learning through experience	Working with others	Learning through experience
				Working with others

In order for young people to be able to develop all these competences, appropriate tools should be set at national and local level: education is key.





# Annex I: Meeting the young people in Italy

## 1. The social entrepreneurs

### AGCI Lazio Solidarity

He is from Rome and he works for AGCI Lazio Solidarity, a social cooperative that provides services such as the care of children, the elderly and the disabled, or the integration of disadvantaged people. Thanks to his studies in development and cooperation, he soon came into contact with the reality of what he had studied at university, such as Oxfam Italia, Action against hunger, Mani Tese NGO where he worked as a local / area manager for non-profit organization.

#### Competences

Its strength points are: motivation and perseverance, ethical and sustainable thinking, planning and management, collaboration with others, taking the initiative.

For him the important skills for the success are: a thought and a way of thinking, managing and managing, thinking, taking the initiative.

#### Challenges

Looking at the territory he believes there are some gaps, in fact he thinks that miss a far-sighted policy capable of supporting the growth and sustainability of a social enterprise; a political agenda in which attention to people is a priority.

#### Opportunities

Instead about opportunity he says that the main opportunity is to connect the local companies / social cooperatives involved in the provision of numerous social services.

Concerning opportunities his social enterprise created he answered he was able to work stimulating in which you can offer and enrich your professional background. And it's all thanks to cooperative cooperatives that generate important social networking.

**Progetto Umanitario Coop. Soc.**

He is from Presezzo (BG) and his social enterprise name is Progetto Umanitario Coop. Soc.

They provide numerous customizable services to allow everyone to find the solution to their problems that are more adaptable and comfortable. Some of these services are: home or hospital caring, m transport services, nursing services or specialist examination, physiotherapy, medicine delivery and medical visits booking.

Competences

He thinks that the competences to start a social enterprise are: motivation and perseverance, creativity, valuing ideas, ethical and sustainable thinking, taking the initiative, planning and management, working with others, learning through experience.

Challenges

Looking at the territory where he works, he answered that in a small town like Bergamo there are not much aggregation between social enterprises. This is one of the factors that prevent the growth of many social economy enterprises.

Opportunities

His enterprise implemented the workforce, and at the same time they provide a qualified support and help to everyone who needs.

The social enterprise they found let allowed him and his team to understand better their territory and the population’s needs. Now, they are able to customize the perfect service based on the people’s requests. All his team has the opportunity to work in good conditions with a good and appropriate contract, that allows all the employees to be independent and have the responsibilities and to be covered by a proper insurance.

PROGETTO UMANITARIO COOP. SOC.	
<u>Location</u> Presezzo, Italy	
<u>Starting date</u> 2017	
<u>Number of employees</u> 3	
Description	
<p>They provide many customizable services to allow everyone to find the most adaptable and comfortable solution. Some of them are: home or hospital caring, day or night, just few hours or 24H; transport services from home to hospital, ambulatory, offices or shops; nursing services or specialist examination; physiotherapy; drugs delivery; medical visits booking.</p>	

### SANA COOP Soc. Coop. Sociale a r.l.

She is from Genoa and she works in SANA COOP Soc. Coop. Sociale a r.l. founded in 2018. The cooperative works on the field of supplementary and substitute assistance to the family at home and in hospitals.

According to her the reason behind her success was the immediate response from users, the creation of a good operating team, the shared governance, the sharing with other cooperatives, the constant presence on the territory and good relations with local associations

#### Competences

She thinks that her competences are: Spotting Opportunities - Vision - Valuing Ideas - Self-awareness and Self-efficacy - Motivation and perseverance - mobilizing resource - Taking the initiative - Planning and management - Working with Others - Learning through experience and she obtained it thanks to Past school, work and voluntary experiences

She thinks that the competences needed to start a social enterprise are all the skills in the annex, but the most important ones are: Spotting Opportunities; Motivation and perseverance; Planning and Management


#### Challenges

She thinks that in Italy we need more state subsidies for the creation and management of cooperatives, greater tax relief for users and less bureaucracy.

#### Opportunities

In Italy, national health care is better than other countries in terms of hospital care, but large gaps still persist. Her cooperative fills the void created by the state in home care.

She thinks that, unfortunately, in Italy, home care is characterized by many illegal activities, cooperatives like hers guarantee legality and offer guarantees to users and workers (contracts, insurance, pension contributions). Her activity also gives the possibility of personal growth.

COOP SANA SERVICE	
<p><u>Website</u> <a href="http://www.csscooperativa.it/cms/">http://www.csscooperativa.it/cms/</a></p>	
<p><u>Location</u> Pavia, Italy</p>	
<p><u>Starting date</u> 2018</p>	
Description	
<p>Coop Sana Service is a Cooperative, which offers health and social care and assistance interventions, characterized by a high professional quality, aimed at protecting frail, elderly and disabled people.</p> <p>Coop Sana Service supports families in caring for their loved ones.</p> <p>In particular, it is aimed at frail people, unable to go to clinics and territorial health facilities, guaranteeing them high-quality assistance, attentive to all aspects of their health.</p> <p>The reference values of Coop Sana Service are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the centrality of the Person / family and in particular of the Elder</li> <li>• improving the quality of life in one's home by promoting health and positive and constructive relationships</li> <li>• the importance of the social role of the Elder / Disabled person and the family</li> </ul> <p>Furthermore, Coop Sana Service operates extensively in the services sector for Healthcare Facilities and Companies, guaranteeing them high quality standards of performance and organization. Coop Sana Service is the answer to the needs of human resources and health services for each type of structure or company.</p>	

### Cooperativa Sociale di Comunità il Monte

He is from Monte San Savino (Arezzo) – Tuscany. His social enterprise is called “Cooperativa sociale di comunità Il Monte”, which is a community cooperative. The main purpose is to intercept the needs of the community and to identify the essential services for the well-being of citizens, especially from the social health point of view. All this is accomplished without neglecting the development of the territory, the common cultural heritage and the promotion of cultural initiatives that repopulate and create aggregation. The goal is to reach a common and widespread well-being, avoid the depopulation of the community and create an efficient form of circular welfare. The cooperative was founded in 2019 and is made up of predominantly of young members, eager to safeguard the integrity of the community of reference.

### Competences

His competences when he started were: spotting opportunities, creativity, vision, valuing ideas, ethical and sustainable thinking, motivation and perseverance, mobilizing resources, mobilizing others, taking the initiative, planning and management, working with others, learning through experience.

He obtained these competences thanks to his experience in the world of franchising sales but above all in the design of new business models that were innovative, sustainable, ethical and socially useful. He has always had a lot of creativity, which applied to the workplace can give exceptional results. Furthermore, he has always had an excellent ability to maintain public relations and create networks, so taking the initiative, mobilizing resources and people are not a difficulty. Working on various projects, learning through experience has always been his main asset, and he has always aimed to create effective collaborations with others and to implement his planning and management skills. All this helped him to develop two fundamental qualities: motivation and perseverance.

### Challenges

In Italy for him we certainly miss financial, technical and legislative support. He was lucky enough to be able to put together a group of resources capable of giving him these tools, but in Italy, for a young entrepreneur, it is very complicated to be able to put these pieces together to build a start-up. In recent years, tools are being created to help start-uppers, even very efficient ones, but the system is often hampered by bureaucracy.

## 2. The aspiring entrepreneurs

### Aspiring entrepreneur 1

She is a development economist, and she works in promoting cooperative enterprises. In fact, she believes that cooperation empowers people are an active part of the development process of a territory.

She loves her work because she helps others to become social entrepreneurs because she works for the cooperative movement. She would like to create a social enterprise because this economic model has a great impact on people life.

#### Competences

The competences she already has, learnt through experience are working with others and planning, motivation and perseverance, ethical and sustainable thinking, spotting opportunities. She got these during her studies, work and volunteering experiences.

The competences that she doesn't has yet are coping with risk and ambiguity, more creativity.

#### Opportunities

Speaking about opportunities she would like to make everyone protagonist of its growth path and to help others to build their future in a context of hardship

### Aspiring entrepreneur 2

She is from Macerata. She would like to become a social entrepreneur because she would like to help the others. She would like to create a social enterprise because she thinks that sharing is caring.

She would like to open a social enterprise in the immigration field because she can merge her will to help the others with her passion: the study of languages. She wants to create a place where everybody is free to express his/ her opinions, to learn and to exchange culture awareness.

#### Competences

The skills that are important to open a social enterprise are: motivation and perseverance, mobilising resources and others, ethical and sustainable thinking, working with the others.

The competences that she already has are motivation and perseverance, self-awareness, working with the others. She got these competences while growing up, studying and travelling. She is still missing the following competences: to mobilising resources, sustainable thinking.

#### Gaps and opportunities

She thinks that in Italy she could have a financial support. However, the things that are missing are the technical tools and mentoring programmes.

She thinks her enterprise could create cultural exchange, less racism, more inclusion events, cooperation and acceptance of the others.

### Aspiring entrepreneur 3

He is from Naples. He is a fond of legal issues and international politics. He wants to become a social entrepreneur because he is close to the values of social enterprise.

He would like to open his social enterprise in the field of assistance and integration of vulnerable people. His idea of social enterprise is the management of urban common goods in the interest of vulnerable people.

#### Competences

The competences he needs to create his enterprise are: financial and economic literacy, creativity, working with others, motivation and perseverance, planning and management, taking the initiative, learning from experience. The ones he already has are: planning and management, working with others, motivation and perseverance, learning from experience gotten. He gets his competences trough studies and learning from experience.

Instead the competences he would need but that he doesn't have yet are those ones: financial and economic literacy, creativity.

#### Gaps

In Italy a young entrepreneur can get in touch with many people who have created their own social enterprise: the possibility to understand positive and negative results of past projects can be an essential value to build your future one.

According to him, the greatest challenge is the absence of a clear legal framework.

#### Opportunities

Talking about the opportunities created from his enterprise, he told that his social enterprise could help the work integration of young newcomers by helping them getting new skills and to find a job.

### Aspiring entrepreneur 4

He is from Naples. He is a mechanical engineering student at the department Enzo Ferrari of UNIMORE (Modena).

He wants to become a social entrepreneur because he thinks social entrepreneurship is the best way to reach goal of personal satisfaction.

He wishes to open his social enterprise in the vehicle engineering sector because he is studying in this field and he is deeply interested in the innovation of the automotive sector. He doesn't have yet a consolidated idea of the kind of social enterprise that he would like to create but somethings linked to a new trend of technical developments trend of vehicle.

#### Competences

According to him, to create a social enterprise you need: motivation and perseverance, financial and economic literacy, mobilising resources, planning and management, working with others, learning through experiences, valuing ideas, creativity.

The competences that he already has are: motivation and perseverance, working with others, creativity, vision, learning through experiences.

He got them on one hand from his studies, on the other hand from his experiences.

Instead the competences he misses are: financial and economic literacy, mobilising resources, planning and management, valuing ideas, vision.

#### Gaps and opportunities

He thinks that his social enterprise could create social development and technical innovation. The opportunities for himself it would be a personal growth, experience and satisfaction to work in his dream field.

#### Aspiring entrepreneur 5

She is from Villa San Giovanni (RC). She is a Translation and Interpretation student at the University of Macerata.

She wants to become a social entrepreneur because she likes helping people in need and she would like to make a difference where is needed. She would like to open a social enterprise in the field of Cultural Mediation to foster multiculturalism and integration of immigrants, and also in the field of assistance for disable people.

Her idea of social enterprise wouldn't only help migrants but it would also teach people, and especially the kids, important values such as acceptance and tolerance.

#### Competences

About competences that she needs to set up her social enterprise, she said that she would need all the competencies of the EntreComp.

The ones she already has are: the ability to spot new opportunities, creativity, ethical and sustainable thinking, she can learn through experience, work with others and take the initiative, motivation and perseverance.

She developed these competences during some of the experiences she had in the past, such as participating in Erasmus projects on the theme of Migration and her volunteering experience in a Basketball tournament for disabled people.

The competences she doesn't have and she would need are the ability to mobilise the resources, the financial and economic literacy, and planning and managing skills.

#### Opportunities

Talking about her country she doesn't know about what kind of help could receive from it.

She would create courses to teach the importance of equality, respect and tolerance, and therefore to spread these values among her local community.

#### Aspiring entrepreneur 6

She is from Lamezia Terme (CZ). The main reason why she would like to become a social entrepreneur is to help other people. She would like to open her social enterprise in the field of migration, to try to facilitate the integration of third country nationals.

She would like to create a place where people feel accepted, learn the new host culture and, at the same time, teach their culture of origin to have a real cultural exchange.



### Competences

The competences needed to create her social enterprise are: vision, valuing Ideas, financial & economic literacy, planning & management, working with others, ethical & sustainable thinking.

She already has: vision, planning and management, working with others, ethical & sustainable thinking. She gets them thanks to her cultural baggage formed thanks to the family background, to her studies and obviously for her work experiences and not. However, she misses for sure financial and economic literacy.

### Challenges

About her country trainings or mentoring programs to help her she doesn't think there are many serious and well-made programs.

Instead about the tools in her country which she could aware of, that could use to open her social enterprise she thinks financial support saying that there is the possibility to request subsidized financial support if the project has certain required parameters (e.g. solvency, creativity, etc.). Instead about what in her country miss she answer that miss meritocracy, in Italy things are still done only if you know the right people.

### Opportunities

About opportunities that her social enterprise could create she said that she would create job opportunities, more integration and less fear for the foreigner, because the knowledge of the other eliminates fears.

And for herself instead the opportunity to use both her knowledge and her passions together.



## Annex II: Meeting the young people in Romania

### 1. The social entrepreneurs

#### Close to You Foundation (Fundatia Alaturi de Voi)

Close to You Foundation located in Iasi, North East Region is one of the main social entrepreneur in Romania due to the three social enterprises that developed since 2008 – UtilDeco in 2008, Job Direct in 2016 and WiseTravel in 2016. It was developed as work integration social enterprise in 2002 with the purpose of providing support for the social and occupational inclusion of people with disabilities or other vulnerable groups. In 2016, Close to You Foundation was declared Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2016 by EY Entrepreneur of the Year.

UtilDeco has created over 100 jobs since 2008 till now, of which at least 40% for people with disabilities. It provides archiving and storage services for documents, production of protective equipment and online store.

Job Direct was established in May 2016 as a Placement and Assistance Agency. It offers services of evaluation, testing, counseling, vocational training, mediation and placement on the labor market, respectively job coaching for people with disabilities or from vulnerable groups. JobDirect is the final step in ADV's work, as it takes the persons from vulnerable groups from the day center, on to UtilDeco and then towards the general labor market, but it also helps people that skip the first two stages, depending on each case. More than 100 persons with disabilities and from vulnerable groups were hired on the general labor market.

WISE.travel was established in 2017 and offers travel services and event organization. A 50% of the profit is donated to NGOs and Social Enterprises. Each person which buy services from WiseTravel can choose his favorite charity (there are charitable organizations for each SDG goal) and, for a period, WISE.travel donates 50% of the profit made from all his purchases. In addition, WISE gives to the travelers various hints of social hotels, coffee shops, tours or other social businesses that are nearby their destinations, without applying any commission to the social enterprises for sending new customers.

#### Competences

When Close to You started its first economic activities (UtilDeco social enterprises), its president already had most of the competences listed by the EntreComp, except financing and economic literacy, planning and management and experience in economic activities.

She considers that all of these competences are fundamental for opening a social enterprise. Even if it is not essential for one person to have all the skills, the team must have them (so it is important that the skills of each person in the team are complementary). In order to manage the entire activity of the social enterprise, it is important that the manager does not have a high level of competence, but has

at least a basic level of all. That's why, she studied a lot economic literacy, participated at business conferences/events and employed specialized people (marketing, sale, production).

### Challenges

When she started all the social enterprises she had financial support from EU funds for social enterprises. In UtilDeco case, she also benefited of financial support for development – loan for development from a bank from Poland and one from Romania. Also for UtilDeco, she had a technical support through EU project and also through a mentorship programme developed by NESsT. Till 2017, Close to You benefited of a fiscal facility offered to work integration social enterprises.

The EU funds for social enterprises start-up are present in Romania. There are no financial support for the development of social enterprises. In present, the fiscal facility for work integration social enterprise is eliminated from the legislation and the Law on social economy does not offer any fiscal or economic facilities for social enterprises.

### Opportunities

All the opportunities for social enterprises are addressed to start-ups through EU funds. Some mentorship programmes were developed in the last five years.

Close to You Foundation provide social aid to over 150,000 beneficiaries, invest over 18 million EUR in the local community and create over 100 jobs.

## **Nod Verde (CIVITAS FOOD HUB S.R.L.)**

Nod Verde is a food hub developed in 2017 by Civitas Foundation in Cluj Napoca, North West Region of Romania. It is a social enterprise and the first food hub created in this region of Romania. Nod Verde offers to small food producers a new retail channel and consumers a healthy alternative to local food products.

### Competences

The manager of NOD Verde considers that the core competences needed for the development of a social enterprise: vision, planning and management and motivation and perseverance. The vision for developing Nod Verde was obtained during a long period in which CIVITAS team works with small farmers and small producers. The experience of the people who worked in the food and sales sector was extremely important for the creation and development of the concept.

### Challenges

Nod Verde star-up was financed through a grant offered by Romanian American. CIVITAS Foundation (the “mother” structure) has a good experience in entrepreneurship development and also in social entrepreneurship, so the technical support, know-how and mentorship for the development of Nod Verde was provided by CIVITAS Foundation team.

### Opportunities

Cluj-Napoca is one of the cities in Romania with the highest absorption of European funds and with the most projects implemented in different areas of the future: recycling, green public transport, etc. Nowadays, in Romania there are EU funds for enterprises start-up and social enterprises start-up.

There are also other funds (from companies or other international organizations), but their level is quite low and they are not constant.

The main benefits for the communities are: increasing local incomes (coming out of subsistence agriculture, agro-tourism), increasing the production capacity of the community, capacity development to sale and promote the products, social capital development.

NOD VERDE (CIVITAS FOOD HUB S.R.L.)	
<u>Website</u>	
<u>Location</u>	
<u>Starting date</u>	
<u>Number of employees</u>	
<b>Description</b>	
<p>The initiative started primarily from the needs of the producers with whom the Civitas Foundation collaborates. Most of them produce on small agricultural lands or in small farms and have reduced quantities of food products, and this significantly diminishes their chances of entering the market - the big chains of shops do not work with them, and the system of agri-food markets does not work properly due to the intermediaries. Nod Verde provide a short supply chain between small food producers and consumers. Nod Verde brings small farmers' products at a click away from consumers, through online orders and by home or office delivery.</p> <p>Nod Verde offers support to agricultural producers through visits, participation in different events (fairs, festivals, etc.), access to programs (with the help of Civitas Foundation) and a market in Cluj Napoca and the surrounding area. It takes care of the producer-consumer relationship since 2017 and offers clients through the home / service delivery service over 240 local products.</p> <p>The Nod Verde business model is based on a web platform where the products of the small farmers are listed, which can be bought and delivered later at the clients' home or offices in Cluj-Napoca and its surroundings. At this time, food from the following categories is provided: Dairy products, including cheese; Meat and meat products; Vegetables and fruits; Bakery products; Medicinal and aromatic plants; Bee products; Cold pressed oil; Craft beverages (wine and beer); Natural syrups, jams and juices; Preserved sauces and products; Pasta.</p>	

## Issue Monitoring

Issue Monitoring was set-up in 2015 as social enterprise. Issue Monitoring is a specific service for monitoring public policies at the level of the Government, Parliament and other public regulatory institutions.

### Competences

Octavian Rusu is the founder of Issue Monitoring, a project that reflects his professional experience of over ten years in advocacy, public affairs and consultancy, working both with private companies and with nonprofit organizations.

For the start-up of Issue Monitoring, the main competences required were: vision, creativity, critical thinking, innovation, perseverance. All these competences were held by the founder of Issue Monitoring. But for carrying out the activity and ensuring financial sustainability, the Issue Monitoring's director declared that he need economic and financial competences, marketing and sales competences, human resources management. The founder of Issue Monitoring hold some of these competences at a basic level, but he developed them through experience and trainings or by reading economic and financial books.

### Challenges

The financial support for Issue Monitoring start-up was ensured through EU funds dedicated for social enterprises development. The program that financed Issue Monitoring start-up provided also technical support for business plan and carry out the activities in the first year. After the first year, the founder decided to follow a mentorship program for business development.

One of the main challenges was to accomplish economic and social objectives too. It was difficult to have economic success in the first two years of activity because half of the employees were young people from vulnerable groups that need a lot of new competences. Issue Monitoring offers also some free services for civil society sector, as part of its social mission.

### Opportunities

In the last three years were established more business incubators and business accelerators that developed more mentorship programs. They could offer support for social business too. Also some investment funds started to be interested in social businesses too. There are also EU funds for social enterprises start-up that are very useful at the beginning.

For the Issue Monitoring's founder, the entrepreneurial activity is a challenge and the team should innovate permanent because the clients' needs change very quickly.

Issue Monitoring	
<u>Website</u> <a href="https://www.issuemonitoring.ro/">https://www.issuemonitoring.ro/</a>	
<u>Location</u> Bucarest	
<u>Starting date</u> 2016	
<u>Number of employees</u> 9	
Description	
<p>At the beginning, Issue Monitoring was established as an association with economic activity (Center for Public Policy Monitoring), but in 2019, the name and legal form have changed to be easier to identify and associate with the online platform of the same name, and to have better access at finance and more credibility to its clients (its structure transformed from association into a limited liability company). During 2015 and 2019, Issue Monitoring has evolved from 4 employees to 8 employees.</p> <p>Issue Monitoring is a specialized service for monitoring public decision that helps anticipate essential changes for any business organization or for the non-governmental sector. Based on a secure online platform optimized for mobile devices, Issue Monitoring reports promptly on potential policy changes, while allowing the interested parties to follow their reflection in the media. Furthermore, the platform incorporates the updated profile of decision makers from public institutions, from the Government, the Parliament, supervisory and regulatory authorities, etc. Issue Monitoring is an advanced tool for monitoring public policy, which incorporates the benefits of modern technology and the analytical expertise of a team of professionals, while being available to public affairs specialists. Issue Monitoring creates the premises for successful public affairs and advocacy interventions and campaigns, ultimately aiming at influencing political decision and formulating public policy.</p> <p>Four years after its inception, Issue Monitoring has succeeded in creating and developing a portfolio of 20 clients (legal entities) who receive real-time information on normative acts of interest. Thus, the platform offers access to more than 200 users - employees of clients, and the number is constantly increasing. Also, the application offers on average about 850 unique alerts per month, corresponding to the normative acts and the area of interest for each client.</p>	

## Iluminis

Iluminis was set-up in 2016 as a local business idea, whose purpose was to provide jobs in a village in the Maramures area. Its activity has diversified after 2017 and offers interior design services in Cluj county in particular.

### Competences


The Iluminis's founder is architect and has a lot of technical competences. He considers that the main competences needed for a social business are perseverance and adaptability to the socio-economic context and market demands. He believes that discussions with other entrepreneurs would have been very helpful. Also for the development of the business, he needed financial and economic literacy and also sales competences. For him it was difficult at the beginning to do all the administrative work and also sales and marketing. Many competences develop in time and learning by doing is the most important competence.

### Challenges

Iluminis received a grant from OMV Petrom to start-up and technical support from NESsT. The founder considers that it is a need for more financing and institutional support for social entrepreneurs. Some of the biggest challenges he faced were the institutional ones, the bureaucracy and the lack of clear information about the formalities to be completed. Also access to finance were difficult for him because of the banks procedures and rules. Because in the Romanian society the social part of a business does not matter, and only the price is important, he had to reduce from the social dimension of the business.

### Opportunities

There are a lot of funds for entrepreneurship start-up and some mentorship programmes were developed. The incubation period for a social business should be 3 to 5 years.

Issue Monitoring	
<u>Website</u> <a href="http://www.iluminish.ro/en">http://www.iluminish.ro/en</a>	
<u>Location</u> Cluj Napoca	
<u>Starting date</u> 2016	
<u>Number of employees</u> 4	
Description	
<p>The field of activity of Illuminis chosen starting from the specific occupations of the area, namely the manufacture of wooden articles, especially of the luminaires. It is a social business financed initially through a OMV-Petrom grant - Andrei's Country program. First it was a workshop for the design and production of wooden luminaires, plexiglass and LED technology, with a special design - the wooden elements were cut at sharp angles.</p> <p>When the founder participated in the social business competition, he didn't know too much about the characteristics of this type of business. The training program and the technical support offered during social business competition convinced him to develop also the social objective of the firm. The social impact refers at the community development. The human resource comes from the rural area, to which architects with design specialization are added, so that the objects required by the clients can be created. Often the objects requested by clients or designed according to their requests are unique products or unique projects, which influence both the working time (design, execution and assembly) and the price.</p> <p>The market demands have made the activity of the company to diversify and to offer integrated services of interior design. They started with wooden luminaires, then they made also furniture and in present they do also interior design.</p>	



## 2. The aspiring entrepreneurs

### Aspiring entrepreneur 1

She is an International and European Affairs third year student from Constanta who dreamed of opening a “social teahouse” ever since she fell in love with the concept and work of the beautiful people from the Bucharest teahouse “San the Fitoceainărie”. From then on, she realized that her purpose in life is to create a warm place that gathers cool people willing to make the world a better place, little by little.

#### Competences

She considers she has the proper main competences in order to successfully become a social entrepreneur, such as: spotting opportunities and motivation and perseverance. She is confident that she is able to further develop some other competences that are not her forte, such as planning and management and coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk. Nevertheless, she strongly thinks that as long as she has the vision, she will be able to acquire any other competences she might need in order to reach her goal of starting a social business.

#### Challenges

She has been able in the past to interact with other social entrepreneurs, benefiting from their experience and knowledge, mentoring being a really important tool for her. Unfortunately, she has not been able to officially enter into a mentoring programme, a tool that she really thinks it would accelerate her process of becoming a social entrepreneur, besides the financial part. She would really appreciate a place that gathers detailed information on how to become a social entrepreneur in Romania, step by step, while offering real-time consultancy and advices for future young entrepreneurs.

#### Opportunities

She does see her idea of opening a social teahouse in Bucharest as an opportunity to gather people with the same interest over a cup of tea, while being able to provide work places to mothers in need, that went through domestic violence and who need a little help to make a drastic change in their lives. In her opinion, the topic of domestic violence is not properly discussed in Romania, often being treated superficially. Her goal is to create a social impact in the community, by providing a place that can facilitate discussions around the topic and supporting at the same time the women in need.

### Aspiring entrepreneur 2

She is an aspiring social entrepreneur from Bucharest, truly passionate about travelling and environment issues. She has found her inspiration during her first years of study at the faculty of Business Administration in Commerce, Tourism, Services, Commodity Science and Quality Management, when she first heard about the concept of becoming a social entrepreneur from one of her colleagues. She now works in a bank and continues to daydream about the moment when she be able to quit her current job and start building her social enterprise. She envisages to build a close to zero waste guesthouse that will attract travellers from all of the world who come to visit Romania.

#### Competences

She thinks about herself that she has what it takes, but strongly believes that the fear of failing has kept her far away from starting to build the social enterprise she has been dreaming of for some time. She has some of the most important competences required such as vision and financial and economic

literacy, whilst admitting she still lacks some essential ones, such as: taking the initiative and going for it, self-awareness and self-efficacy and also coping with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk. She thinks she can further develop some other competences needed, emphasizing that she still needs to gather the necessary courage to pursue her dreams.

### Challenges

She has been following several European and national hubs for social entrepreneurs for a while, considering that there is some ambiguity for her when it comes to what are the necessary steps for becoming a social entrepreneur in Romania. She feels the need for additional help, especially when it comes to her idea of building a guesthouse that focuses on having close to zero waste. She does consider that in Romania this idea will be one that will meet many challenges, especially when it comes to specific knowledge. She would love to enter into a mentoring/financial support programme/consultancy, that can guide her and help her build and grow her idea. At the moment, she is not aware of such an opportunity in Romania.

### Opportunities

She does see her idea as an innovative one, especially for Romania, being that no one (as far as she is aware) has attempted to do a similar guesthouse in Bucharest. She sees the opportunity in doing something challenging but with a high impact in the society, being able to raise funds that will not only facilitate the guesthouse to self-sustain itself but also to raise awareness amongst travellers and citizens about the environment and waste issues. She envisages to hire aspiring young entrepreneurs like her, hoping to provide them the needed mentoring.

### Aspiring entrepreneur 3

She is an artistic aspiring social entrepreneur, passionate about traditional craftsmanship and foreign languages. She currently studies to become an authorized translator but has also been pursuing the idea of building a social enterprise focused on selling handmade products. She got her inspiration from Mesteshukar ButiQ, a Bucharest based social enterprise that really sparked her motivation to continue their initiative, hoping that she will be able as well to support and help preserving local traditional craftsmanship.

### Competences

She thinks about herself as a creative person and one that truly values ideas, whilst admitting she still lacks the motivation and perseverance as well as the financial and economic literacy. She lacks the proper knowledge to actually start a social enterprise but she considers having the required vision. She considers to be good at working with others, whilst being able to learn by doing.

### Challenges

She has been starting to research a little bit more about what it takes to start a social enterprise, by analysing other successful Romanian social enterprises and also by accessing online articles and websites that provide important information on the topic. One of her main worries is related to funding and the capacity to gather the necessary funds to build such an enterprise.

### Opportunities

She sees a good opportunity to start building such a social enterprise, especially nowadays when it becomes harder and harder to preserve and pass certain skills from generation to generation. She envisages to gather craftsmen and products from all over the country, with the purpose of promoting and passing their skills to the younger generation as well.

#### Aspiring entrepreneur 4

She is a final year student from the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, passionate about travelling and discovering new ways of being helpful. She believes that a business with social objectives will bring her greater personal and professional satisfaction. Her idea is to start a social enterprise that focuses on recycling and different measures to reduce pollution. She would love to provide education to youth and citizens in general about the importance of recycling and conservation of the environment, through different interactive workshops provided by her social enterprise.

#### Competences

From her point of view, several competences are required in order to become a social entrepreneur, such as motivation and perseverance, ability to mobilize resources, discovering and spotting new opportunities, as well as having the financial and economic literacy. She considers she does have several key competences, such as initiative, ability to work in a team, vision, financial and economic knowledge, motivation and perseverance but also ethical thinking. She is confident that all these competences will guide her to an entrepreneurial path. She would like to have more knowledge about planning and management and also to increase her ability to manage uncertainty, ambiguity and risks. She started building her competences by following business accelerators such as: Start-up Weekend, Social Impact Award, Future Makers, which include mentors and mentoring sessions.

#### Challenges

She has been following several business accelerators for a while and she considers that she has the possibility to obtain the needed funds through different national contests that have been organized so far. When it comes to challenges, she feels that there is the need of a stronger support from the government, especially when it comes to the financial support of future social young entrepreneurs. Awareness amongst youth is a big challenge, especially when it comes to business opportunities and the possibility of becoming a social entrepreneur.

#### Opportunities

Even if there is room for improvement in this area, she considers that young people do have to opportunity to access Erasmus+ programs/projects that focuses on social entrepreneurship and also to join incubators for business and social ideas. She considers that her future social enterprise will have a great impact on society, especially when it comes to raising awareness among the community regarding recycling, thus helping to create in the near future a mind-set responsible for the environment.

#### Aspiring entrepreneur 5

He is an aspiring social entrepreneur, working in IT for over 4 years and being passionate about different programming languages. His main objective is to create a learning space for children coming from orphanages, introducing them to the programming world. He is confident that every child should learn how to code, providing them the opportunity to create virtual worlds within the computer and skills that will facilitate them the chance to build successful careers.

#### Competences

He believes that several competences are needed in order to successfully become a social entrepreneur, such as the ability to spot new opportunities, motivation and perseverance, vision and financial and economic literacy. He considers he has most of the needed competences, whilst being able to take the initiative when is required and also to cope with uncertainty, ambiguity and risk. He admits he still needs to work on his current knowledge regarding the actual steps needed to become

a social entrepreneur but feels confident that he will not have any problems in gathering the necessary information.

#### Challenges

He has been following several resource websites for a while and considers that he might encounter some challenges when to gathering the necessary resources to start such an enterprise. He feels that such initiatives do not receive the proper support, especially when we are talking about measures coming from the government.

#### Opportunities

He truly considers having a great idea that could really have a great impact on his local community, especially on children that come from unfortunate situations. He is confident that teaching these children about the power of programming, he will further empower them to become independent and successful youngsters, able to make a change in the world.

#### Aspiring entrepreneur 6

She is a Business and Administration second year student from Suceava who envisaged to have a social café from the beginning of her bachelor studies. She has always had an entrepreneurial mind-set but now she can confidently admit that she is determined to become a social entrepreneur.

#### Competences

She considers having the main competences in order to successfully become a social entrepreneur, such as: vision, ability to spot opportunities and motivation and perseverance. She is confident that she will be able to further develop additional competences that are needed in order to become a social entrepreneur, her studies giving her the necessary resources to do so.

#### Challenges

She has been able to follow similar initiatives in Bucharest and considers really important the mentoring phase of becoming a social entrepreneur. She is aware that some resources are available for aspiring young entrepreneurs like her, but she admits that she has yet not being able to identify the necessary resources and time to proceed with her idea.

#### Opportunities

Her goal is to create a social impact in the community, by creating a place that combines the socializing part of gathering together around a cup of coffee with the idea of helping the people in need. She is not yet sure what her target group will end up being but she is confident that the right idea will come along.



## Annex III: Meeting the young people in Belgium

### 1. The social entrepreneurs

#### Communa

Maxime Zaït is one of the founders of Commune (see Best Practice 1, below). To mitigate the negative consequences of the vacancy, Communa rehabilitates the unused spaces by putting them temporarily at the disposal of citizen projects which make flourish laboratories of urban practices.

#### Competences

Before Maxime and his colleagues founded Communa, they already had all the competences indicated on the EntreComp except for “Planning and management” and for “Financing and economic literacy”.

They acquired all the other competences thanks to some mentoring programs they followed (especially the Coopcity and Solvays ones) and thanks to the help of experts (meaning other entrepreneurs with more experience).

According to him, the most important competence that a young entrepreneur should have to start his own enterprise is “Motivation and perseverance”.

#### Challenges

When Maxime and its colleagues opened Communa they had Financial support through BECIRULAR and other call for projects. Plus, they also participated in mentoring programs such as the ones from Coopcity and Solvay.

According to him, nowadays there are more kind of Financial support tools, especially through public funding and private foundations. Plus, there are more and more mentoring programs.

He is persuaded that nowadays the situation has improved: young have more opportunities and help if they wish to open a social enterprise. Plus, more and more, the public is convinced of the importance of social economy and support these kinds of enterprises and initiatives.

However, he thinks that there are still some challenges to the opening of a social enterprise from a young person. In fact, he believes that the concept of “share governance” is still widely unknown. Plus, there should be a database for all the public and private subventions at local level, in order to help young entrepreneurs to find the right funding for their activity; and in general, there should be more subventions for the creation of social economy enterprises.

#### Opportunities

The creation of Commune has a very positive impact on the local community. In fact, it “gave back” private spaces to citizens and created public places for the creation of new activities and the gathering of people. Plus, it helps with the requalification of some neighbourhood and it gives the possibility to start new businesses in those neighbourhoods.

For the business partners and employees of Communa, working in such enterprise gave them not only a job but also a mission and values. They have the feeling that they are working for a good purpose!

COMMUNA	
<p><u>Website</u> <a href="http://www.communa.be">http://www.communa.be</a></p>	
<p><u>Location</u> Brussels, Belgium</p>	
<p><u>Starting date</u> 2013</p>	
<p><u>Number of employees</u> 10</p>	
Description	
<p>In 2013, Communa was created by five students who wanted to be different. They were inspired by many Brussels initiatives that facilitated grouped housing in empty buildings: a community gathered quickly around the project.</p> <p>To mitigate the negative consequences of real estate vacancy, Communa rehabilitates the unused spaces by putting them temporarily at the disposal of citizen projects. These shared places intermingle culture and creation, innovative economic activities, community life and housing. While promoting innovation and socio-cultural diversity, Communa stops the phenomenon of real estate vacancy at the source and transforms it into an opportunity for local development.</p> <p>Revitalizing existing infrastructure and promoting the use of recycled materials in innovative ways can create value and significantly reduce environmental impact. Communa values what already exists and places value on use, the circular economy and reuse.</p> <p>The people who occupy the premises pay a free and conscious monthly contribution to Communa. In this way, they cover the expenses related to the occupation, reimburse the costs related to the rehabilitation of the place and participate in the running costs of Communa in activating other places. The free and conscious contribution offers everyone the opportunity to participate at the level of their means, in an honest and united way.</p>	

Rodolphe was working for the Brussels Region, in the field of environment and waste management. That's where he got the idea of BeerFood! The BeerFood project aims to promote brewery grains (malt waste for making beer) in the human diet. These grains will serve as a basis for healthy, local and responsible products that will be processed in the Brussels-Capital Region.

### Competences

When they started, he already had almost all the competences listed by the EntreComp, because he had already worked in this field and he was personally interested in the world of social economy and solidarity. He missed however planning and management and financing and economic literacy.

He thinks that all of these competences are fundamental for opening a social enterprise. It is not essential for one person to have all of them, but the team has to (so it is important for the competences of each person of the team to be complementary).

### Challenges

When they started their enterprise, they did a mentoring program, the one from Coopcity. They did not need a legislative support because Rodolphe has a legal background.

He is not aware of any kind of new tools or forms of support for the opening of social enterprises. However, the social economy and social enterprises are more and more gaining popularity so there is an interest from the public institution in promoting this field.

The main thing that is missing, and that would help young people opening their social enterprise, are financial tools, support and opportunities. There should be a mechanism of tax exemption for the new social enterprises.

### Opportunities

There has been a positive reception by our local community to our idea and to our products. BeerFood had success not only within our community: in fact, several big enterprises are interested in buying our products.

BEERFOOD	
<p><u>Website</u>  <a href="http://www.beerfood.be">www.beerfood.be</a></p>	<p>BEERFOOD IS ABOUT GIVING A TASTY SECOND LIFE TO DELICIOUS SPENT GRAIN. 100% MADE IN BELGIËQUE!</p>  <p>The grains used to brew beer by urban microbreweries are usually thrown away. Instead, we transform those grains into delicious crackers.</p>
<p><u>Location</u>            Brussels, Belgium</p>	
<p><u>Starting date</u>            2017</p>	
<p><u>Number of employees</u>            4</p>	
Description	
<p>The Beerfood project aims to promote brewery grains (malt waste for making beer) in the human diet and therefore, diffuse a more sustainable way of living, consuming and producing. These grains will serve as a basis for healthy, local and responsible products that will be processed in the Brussels-Capital Region (cereal bars, chips, biscuits, waffles, breads, etc.).</p> <p>To produce a beer, malted cereals are needed: they are crushed and infused in hot water to extract the sugars. This rest, which is no longer necessary for the manufacture of beer, are the dreges. These often end up in garbage or as food for livestock. Except that in Brussels, so these grains are often unused.</p> <p>However, these residues are very interesting from a nutritional point of view because they are rich in fibres and proteins. As a result, the three entrepreneurs created the crackers. With the number of breweries in Brussels, the raw material was not lacking: the Brussels Beer Project, the Nano Brewery of the Hermitage and Beerstorming supply with their grain. The reuse makes possible not only to fight against the food waste, but their transformation may help the creation of local employment.</p> <p>For the moment, there are three tastes in the colors of Belgium. Black Lord (black), smoked onions, yellow sir (yellow), mustard and rosemary, and red queen (red), beetroot and fennel.</p>	



## Coop It Easy

Virgine Dewulf was one of the founders of CoopIt Easy, a social enterprise that aims to provide open source and professional IT tools and services to social economy actors.

### Competences

Virginie and its team already had many of the EntreComp competences. However, others were developed during the creation of the social enterprise, also thanks to the mentoring programme of Coopcity, such as self-awareness, valuing ideas, learning through experience and mobilising resources.

Virginie and its colleagues already had these competences because both of them have already worked in the past, and his colleague had already created an enterprise in the past. Plus, as mentioned before, they did a mentoring programme with Coopcity.

According to Virginie, all these competences are important when you wish to create a social enterprise. However, others are fundamental, which are: coping with ambiguity, uncertainty and risk, self-awareness and self-efficacy, working with others, having a vision and financial and economic literacy.

### Challenges


A part of the mentoring programme of Coopcity, Virginie and its colleagues used other tools to develop the social enterprise. They followed, in partnership with Coopcity, a programme with a legislative coach, which helped them with the legislative processes. Concerning the financial tools, they created the financial business plan of the 18/19. They got funding through several tools: they participated to public call for project for the development of social economy of the city of Brussels and other public funding. Now, they fund themselves through the selling of their products. Moreover, at the beginning of their business, thanks to Coopcity and Village Partenaire, they got the chance to have spaces almost free of charges.

She thinks that for a young person that wish to open a social enterprise there are a lot of tools available. It is not always very easy to find them or to understand how they work, but they exist and are efficient.

What maybe is still very hard is to understand how to get funding at the beginning. Everyone should find the tools that works best for himself, but it is still very difficult.

### Opportunities

The proof that our local community is interested in our products and services is the fact that CoopItEasy can't stop growing they started in 4 and they will soon be 8.

COOP IT EASY	
<p><u>Website</u> <a href="http://www.coopiteasy.be">www.coopiteasy.be</a></p>	
<p><u>Location</u> Brussels, Belgium</p>	
<p><u>Starting date</u> 2015</p>	
<p><u>Number of employees</u> 8 (in September)</p>	
Description	
<p>In 2015, a team of IT volunteers challenged itself to implement a management system based on Odoo for the BEES Coop, a well-known Food Coop in Schaerbeek. Soon enough, other new transition projects contacted BEES coop to get the same system.</p> <p>Two of the IT volunteers decided it was time to offer their services to all other amazing social economy actors. And this marked the beginning of Coop It Easy.</p> <p>Coop It easy aims to provide open source and professional IT tools and services to social economy actors. They can then focus on activities that will directly contribute to a better society. They believe that their clients, through their activities, will contribute to the emergence of a fairer and more sustainable society. In that case, IT tools and services are means that Coop It Easy can use to empower our clients and indirectly participate ourselves to these changes. Their clients are more than just clients: they give important insights about ways to improve their services and better match their needs.</p> <p>Coop It Easy believes in social innovation and want every actor, large and small structures, to have access to their services. That's why they have a different price for every project.</p>	

## 2. The aspiring entrepreneurs

### Aspiring entrepreneur 1

She is an expert in communication, and they are four business partners, which are opening a communication agency for clients that have projects with a positive impact on society. They offer several services: communication strategies, website development, graphic contents, etc. Their work has a positive impact on the business development of their clients (which normally are NGOs, associations, foundations, etc.).

#### Competences

She already has almost all the competences of the EntreComp, and she is developing others such as: “planning and management” and “coping with ambiguity, uncertainty and risk”. She personally does not have the “financing and economic literacy” and “mobilising resources” but in her team there a business developer that is in charge of this.

She learned the competences that she already has from past experiences. In fact, she has started a project in the past and the other members of her team already have worked in this field. Moreover, they are following a mentoring program of Coopcity, where she is developing several of these competences. Plus, thanks to her network, she learned from the experience of other social entrepreneurs.

She thinks that the most important competences for the creation of the social enterprise are “taking the initiative” and “coping with ambiguity, uncertainty and risks”.

#### Challenges

According to her, there are many tools for the creation of a social enterprise, but sometimes it is hard to find them and choose the right one for its own project. Especially, many of the mentoring programs are short term.

They have participated to the mentoring programmes of Déclic en perspective and Coopcity, which helped them to start their social enterprise.

Plus, thanks to SMART, they started to have clients (and therefore a cashflow) before the actual creation of the social enterprise. This gave them the funds for the creation of the enterprise. But they did not find any other public funding (especially to hire another person to work for them).

According to her what is really missing is an institution/organisation that provides juridical support and consultancy. Plus, the mentoring programs should be all long-term programs.

#### Opportunities

Our expectation for the future is to continue to have clients and to grow, to hire more persons, and to help them in creating a social impact in our community.

### Aspiring entrepreneur 2

She studied cooperation and has life experiences abroad. Her idea is to create a “Café solidaire”, a solidarity coffee house, in Liege. It is a place where you can find products, especially tea and coffee, which directly come from sustainable productions, in the framework of international cooperation.

#### Competences

She already has many of the competences of the EntreComps, especially the ones concerning “Ideas and opportunities”. What she lacks the most are the technical aspects of the creation of an enterprise, especially “planning and management” and “Financial and economic literacy”. With her previous working experience, she developed a bit the skill “mobilising resources”.

She thinks that the most important competences are “planning and management”, “mobilising resources” and “financial and economic literacy”.

### Challenges

She has the impression that there are some tools that may help an aspiring entrepreneur to create its business, but they are widely unknown by young persons, especially if you have never worked in this field before.

Concerning the final support, she found some private financial tools that may help her. However, what she would really need is really a mentoring program or some kind of support to develop her business plan.

### Opportunities

Her next steps would be to try to develop the competence that she does not have already: she has a great idea, but she has to understand how to actually do it.

She thinks that her business could really have a good impact on her local community as it will contribute to educate and stimulate the citizens’ curiosity towards a more sustainable way of consuming and living. Plus, it will also contribute have a positive economic impact on third countries.

### Aspiring entrepreneur 3

The idea of Isabelle is to set up creative workshops to teach to people of all ages a manual knows how (sawing, gardening, cooking, create furniture, etc.), that today many have lost. Isabelle thinks that to develop manual skills is a way to learn better who we are, and it helps to have a different perception of the object and of the world that surrounds us, as well as the consumption mentality that we have nowadays. Isabelle got interested in the world of social economy as she thinks it is the best way to make her idea come true.

### Competences

Isabelle is an engineer and an architect, she was working for the City of Brussels, for the section of sustainable development. The sustainable development and the sustainability of our society has always been what interested her. At the beginning of her career she was a free-lance architect so she has some financial and management knowledges, which will be useful for the creation of her enterprise.

Therefore, due to her previous professional experience she already has more or less all the competence of the EntreComp.

She believes that the competences that are the most important for her right now are: self-awareness and self-efficacy, financial and economic literacy, taking the initiative, planning and management, motivation and perseverance and working with others.

### Gaps

When Isabelle started to think about creating her social enterprise, she found a couple of interesting tools to help her: she has done a training with *Crédél*, a training that encourages women entrepreneurship. Then she did the *Déclit en perspective* training, which has been very useful for her. However, these tools exist and work very well but they are hard to find if you do not already work in the field of social economy. It is true that once we enter this world, it becomes very easy to find many other tools. She has the impression that public institutions do not provide to young people the tools needed to set up a social enterprise.

Right now, she would need help to do the first steps into the realisation of her social enterprise, which means a stronger support for the legal and financial aspect of the creation of the enterprise, as well as for all the human aspect. It is hard to understand how to take the first steps. She will contact *Group One* or *Job Brussels*, or *Coopcity*, which are mentoring and coaching programs and incubators, to help her in these first steps.

Another thing that she finds very complicated is the heterogeneous landscape of Belgium: it is very hard to understand which rules and tools apply. She believes that in Belgium there should a unique public institution/support tool to help people and young to open their social enterprise.

### Opportunities

With her social enterprise Isabelle wants to give back to her community, for her it is a personal motivation to believe that she can contribute to change things and to help people understanding that we can live in a more sustainable way. With the creation of this social enterprise and the activities that she proposes, she can contribute to this, especially working with other young people.

It is also a personal motivation, she feels the need to work in something that she believes in, and to give this model to her children.

### Aspiring entrepreneur 4

Marianne is 25 years old and she lives in Brussels, she has a degree in international cooperation and a master's in engineering and social development. She has always been passionate by social entrepreneurship, a topic that she has followed during all her studies.

She is interested in the field of recycling combined with education and awareness raising she wants her enterprise to have a positive social and environmental impact on her community; and to spread awareness about a better way of living.

She is currently working in a start up in the field of sustainability (they produce gifts card to give to a person an experience, a workshop on sustainability). Her idea is to open, in partnership with another young friend, a secondhand shop of used dishes and clothes.

### Competences

She had some of the competences from her personal background, such as self-awareness, motivation and perseverance. While others she was able to learn them at the university during her studies, such as mobilising resources and management and programming. While other are just part of her personality, such as taking the initiative (during her university years she already created and put in place several projects) and working with the others.

She feels that she has still to learn about economic and financial literacy, and mobilising resources.

She believes that the most important thing for a young entrepreneur today are coping with ambiguity and risks, this is the most difficult thing for her. Also, it is very important to know how to work with the others and how peoples' competences can complement each other.

### Gaps

She believes that Belgium, and in particular Brussels, offers a really wide range of services and trainings for people who wish to develop new competence sin order to open their social enterprises. There are a lot of trainings that help you to develop the business idea and find the rights tools to put it in place.

However, sometimes it is hard to find information or support for the financial and legal part. Which is the most difficult thing according to Marianne.

### Opportunities

Marianne wishes to become a social entrepreneur to be able to employ herself in a field and in a business, which is ethic and which is able to spread awareness in her community about very important topics. In particular, she wishes to make a difference when it comes to people's attitude towards recycling and sustainability.

## Aspiring entrepreneur 5

Virgile is 25 years old and he works as a consultant for project development. He has a degree in engineering with a focus on energy and especially renewable energy.

His idea is to create an Eco-hackaton with enterprises of the social economy, to help to solve some of their issues. The eco-hackaton will last one weekend, and will gather coaches and will provide these social enterprises with a mentoring program to help them solve issues related to environment, energy efficiency and consumption, etc. Normally to solve these issues social enterprise externalises this expertise, his goal is to train them to teach them how to solve these issues internally. Mentors will be people who share the values and goal of the social enterprises.

Perhaps, a second phase to implement these ideas may be set up as well.

### Competences

Virgile already has all the competences of the "Into action" part, as he has developed this with its past and current working experiences and through its studies. He has also all the competences from ideas and opportunities, as he already has a clear idea of its project, as well as where to find the resources to develop it.

For the "Resources" part, he struggles a bit more. Ha has the motivation and perseverance, as well as the self-awareness and self-efficacy. He would need more support for the financial and economic literacy (even if he has a little background on accounting) and mobilising others, meant as benchmarking.

### Challenges

Virgile was already familiar with the world of social economy in Brussels, with its main actors and incubators. He has followed the Declic en Perspective program and he has collaborated with Coopcity.

He believes that in Belgium it is not hard to find support and contacts to develop its idea, as well as to find mentoring programs and financial and legislative support. It is easy to find support if you are already familiar with the world of social economy in Belgium and in particular in Brussels.

For him, the hardest part is to find the right financial support, to help him to develop the business model of its project.

Another great challenge for him is to find the right work balance: in fact, he works full time and to develop at the same time his project is hard.

#### Possibilities

With his project Virgile wishes to raise awareness around the topic of green energy, renewable energy and clean energy consumption. He wishes to teach citizens and entrepreneurs how to act and produce with a low carbon footprint and in a more sustainable and ecologic way. He wish to have a positive impact on the society, and contribute to the creation of a green and sustainable ecosystem.

## Annex IV: Template for interviewing the young social entrepreneurs

*NB. The interview had to be translated in the national language of the partners. In annex of the interview there were the graphics of the EntreComp.*

### GENERAL DATA

Name and surname:

Date of birth:

Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other

Location:

### Introduction

Q1. Please present your social enterprise (name, activities, brief history, and field of activity).

Q2. You have been selected as a best practice, according to you, which factor makes you a good example in your field?

### PART I – Competences

Q3. Which competences did you already have when you started your social enterprise (please select the competences among the 15 present in the Annex)?

Q4. How did you get these competences?

Q5. Which competences do you think a young entrepreneur needs to have to open a new social enterprise (please select the competences among the 15 present in the Annex)?

### PART II – Gaps

Q6. When you opened your social enterprise, which tools did you have access to? Pick them among the options below, and if you can, specify the kind of tool that was available in your country.

- Financial support:
- Legislative support:
- Technical support:
- Mentoring programs:
- Other:



Q7. Which tools are now available? Pick them among the options below, and if you can, specify the kind of tool that is available in your country.

- Financial support:
- Legislative support:
- Technical support:
- Mentoring programs:
- Other:

Q8. Nowadays, you think that the situation is (select one option and specify why):

- Improved:
- The same:
- Worsened:

Q9. Which tools do you think miss nowadays in your country for the implementation of a social enterprise?

### PART III - Opportunities

Q10. Which opportunities your social enterprise created for the local community?

Q11. Which opportunities did the social enterprise created for you and the people who work with you?

## Annex V: Template for interviewing the aspiring young social entrepreneurs

*NB. The interview had to be translated in the national language of the partners. In annex of the interview there were the graphics of the EntreComp.*

### GENERAL DATA

Name and surname (optional):

Date of birth:

Gender (select):

- Male
- Female
- Other

Level of education (select you higher degree obtained):

- Middle school
- High school
- Bachelor
- Master
- Plus

Location:

### Introduction

Q1. Tell us something about yourself (2/3 sentences max).

Q2. Why do you want to become a social entrepreneur? (2/3 sentences max)

Q3. Why would you like to create a social enterprise?

Q4. In which field do you wish to open your social enterprise?

Q5. Why did you choose this field?

Q6. What is your idea? What kind of social enterprise do you want to create?

### PART I – Competences

Q7. Looking at the 15 competences on the figure in Annex, according to you, which of them do you need to set up your social enterprise?

Q8. Which of these competences do you already have?

Q9. How did you get them?

Q10. Among the 15 competences listed in Annex, which competences would you need, that you don't have, to build your social enterprise?

Q11. Are there in your country trainings or mentoring programs to get them?

#### PART II – Gaps

Q12. Are there tools in your country, which you are aware of, that you can use to open your social enterprise? Select the ones that exist, and if you can, specify.

- Financial support
- Legislative support
- Technical support
- Mentoring
- Other

Q13. Which tools would like to have, and that are not available right now in your country, in order to be able to create your social enterprise (e.g. financial tools, incubators, etc.)?

#### PART III – Opportunities

Q14. Which opportunities will your social enterprise create for the local community?

Q15. Which opportunities will the social enterprise create for you?