

Empower Youth organizations through Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



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SUMMARY

This policy recommendations document is the final result of the EYSET project and is prepared by PA with the collective efforts of the EYSET consortium.

The document provides a set of recommendations targeted at policymakers and stakeholders to underscore the significance of enhancing joint solutions to common challenges related to social and labour inclusion for young people and young people with disabilities.

The document is prepared through a comprehensive approach, incorporating feedback, results, suggestions, and insights garnered through intensive discussions. Two online focus groups were conducted with project partners to delve into youth challenges and explore potential recommendations. Additionally, the document is further enriched with contributions and invaluable input from key stakeholders engaged in youth-related initiatives within the Western Balkans (WB) and the European Union (EU), facilitated through two Online EU Living Labs.

The policy recommendations endeavour to strategically address themes such as accessible and quality training, affordability, inclusivity, youth entrepreneurship, and tourism opportunities for youth. The overarching objective is to contribute to fostering a suitable environment for cooperation across different regions of the world, EU countries and Western Balkans, through joint initiatives raising awareness about the importance of boosting a suitable environment to actively contribute to youth employment by harnessing the potential of social entrepreneurship and leveraging the resources within the tourism value chain.



1. ABOUT THE PROJECT

This section provides a brief overview of the EYSET project, outlining the project's aim, objectives, collaborative efforts of partners, and key actions undertaken over the course of its implementation, offering a glimpse of the main outcomes and results achieved. Furthermore, it encompasses a description of the consortium members, which have effectively executed and supervised the activities of the EYSET project towards its successful finalisation.

A. EYSET PROJECT

Empowering Youth Organisations through Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism, EYSET project aims at contributing to the creation of a suitable environment **to empower and raise the capacities of youth organisations and youth workers working with young people and young people with disabilities**, outside formal learning. The aim is to **enhance youth social inclusion** and **fast-track integration into the labour market**, through providing youth organisations with **proper methodologies**, **methods and tools** to **empower and foster the spirit of social entrepreneurship among young people and young people with disabilities in the tourism value chain.** The EYSET project is also about transforming perceptions and showing the world that young people with disabilities have the talent and capability to be leaders in the realm of tourism and social entrepreneurship.

EYSET contributes to creating transnational networks to foster cooperation across different regions from EU and Western Balkans enhancing synergies and complementarities among organisations working with youth and the labour market. EYSET takes proactive steps towards fostering the social and labour inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities involving young people with disabilities in building more accessible tools for their employability enhancing their personal autonomy and their social and labour inclusion.

THE MAIN RESULTS OF THE PROJECT, CARRIED OUT TO ACHIEVE THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OUTLINED ARE AS BELOW:

R1. Capacity building for youth organisations Guidelines and a Training pack for organisations working in the youth field to develop inclusive services and accessible material for youth employment exploiting non formal and informal learning and transnational network and synergies to raise capacity of youth organisations in supporting social and labour inclusion of young people and young people with disabilities in being social entrepreneurs in the tourism value chain.

R2. <u>Toolkit</u> directed to youth workers to enhance social entrepreneurship among young people and young people with disabilities. The toolkit created supports the innovation



in youth work introducing more inclusive methodologies, methods and tools, as well as it raises the awareness of the importance of the creation of accessible material also in non-formal and informal education direct to young people to leave no one behind.

R3. Policy recommendations for stakeholders about the importance of enhancing social and labour inclusion of young people and young people with disabilities exploiting social entrepreneurship and the resources of the tourism value chain. It will be useful to raise awareness among stakeholders about the importance of the creation of a suitable environment to boost youth employment.

B. EYSET CONSORTIUM

The 8 consortium partners that have implemented the EYSET project are: IMPULSA IGUALDAD, former PREDIF (Spain), Controvento Societa Cooperativa Sociale Onlus, Controvento (Italy), Diesis Network, Diesis (Belgium), Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria, CGC (Spain), Forum for Civic Initiatives, FIQ (Kosovo), Association for Democratic Prosperity - ZID, ADP-Zid (Montenegro), Partners Albania for Change and Development, PA (Albania), and South East European Youth Network, SEEYN (Bosnia and Herzegovina). In the annex of this document a detailed description of the 8 consortium partners profile and activities is provided.



2. INTRODUCTION

The global youth population is significant, comprising about 16% of the world's population, with projections to peak at 13% by 2065. Additionally, an estimated 15% of the global population, or one billion people, experience some form of disability, with up to 190 million facing significant disabilities. Among these, youth with disabilities, numbering between 180 and 220 million worldwide, are often among the most marginalized and economically disadvantaged. Youth unemployment has seen fluctuations, with rates peaking at 24.4% in 2013 post the 2008 financial crisis. However, it has remained consistently higher for youth compared to the general population. Discrimination and barriers related to disability further compound challenges in education, employment, and social participation. EU data reveals notable disparities in employment rates, with only 50.6% of persons with disabilities employed compared to 74.8% without disabilities. The unemployment rate for persons with disabilities is also higher at 17.1%. Additionally, women with disabilities, young disabled persons, and those with high support needs face heightened discrimination in the labor market. This underscores the urgent need for inclusive policies and practices to ensure equal opportunities and participation for all.



3. METHODOLOGY

The development of the policy recommendations was guided by a collaborative and inclusive approach, aiming to engage both project partners and all relevant stakeholders working in the promotion of social and labour inclusion of young people and young people with disabilities. Two primary components were instrumental in shaping these recommendations: two online brainstorming sessions with the project partners and two sessions of comprehensive online EU/WB living lab, targeted at both public and private organisations dedicated to fostering the social and labour inclusion of young people, and young people with disabilities.

TWO ONLINE BRAINSTORMING MEETINGS

The initial phase involved the formulation of a preliminary draft of the policy recommendations, drawing from the insights and outcomes garnered during two dynamic online brainstorming sessions held with our esteemed project partners, setting the foundation for the subsequent phases. Leveraging the collective expertise and experience of our partners, coupled with a thorough examination of the project's progress, produced documents, challenges and opportunities identified, these sessions served as pivotal forums for in-depth deliberation.

Through a structured set of questions, discussions centred around the determination of the document structure, key challenges identification and potential recommendations. Ensuring that the document reflected the observations, and suggestions derived from interactive engagements with pertinent stakeholders throughout project implementation. These reflections culminated in a refined and structured initial draft of the policy recommendations, that served as the support material to share with the stakeholders for the development of the next step, EU Online Living Lab.

TWO SESSIONS OF EU ONLINE LIVING LAB

Another aspect of our methodology involved two sessions of a comprehensive online EU/WB living lab, which directly engaged a diverse spectrum of representatives of ten organisations. The living lab format was strategically designed to foster co-creation, ensuring the active participation of all key stakeholders.

Through these sessions were gathered insights from selected stakeholders, focusing on the vital role of social entrepreneurship and tourism resources in promoting the social and labour inclusion of young people, including young people with disabilities. The EYSET EU Living Lab brought together a group of experts representing diverse stakeholders including social enterprises, academia, public administration, and civil society coming from Spain, Italy, and the Western Balkans, alongside European networks and organisations. Their collective aim was to analyse and reflect on the emerging challenges and needs, possible ideas, responses, initiatives, and solutions, to generate meaningful and useful policy recommendations. Overall, the guided group discussions served as a platform for collecting diverse perspectives, best practices, and



experiences, thereby enriching the policy recommendations presented to both national and European stakeholders.

Following the conclusion of the living lab, invaluable suggestions and feedback were meticulously gathered and synthesised in a comprehensive report. This report served as a crucial resource in refining and finalising the definitive version of the policy recommendations. This iterative process ensures that the final document truly represents the collective wisdom and expertise of all parties involved, creating a solid framework for advancing the social and labour inclusion of young people.



4. POLICY ISSUES & CHALLENGES

This section offers a comprehensive insight into the challenges and needs identified by the EYSET project, in the framework of its previous activities. These insights have been gleaned through a comprehensive process involving task implementation, extensive discussions in meetings, and interviews conducted with both young people and youth organisation representatives, supported by the findings in the report "Needs of Young People and Youth Organizations for Enhanced Support Services in Youth Employability". In accordance with the scope of the EYSET project, challenges have been systematically grouped into 6 main categories to ensure a more comprehensive representation. The identified challenges underscore critical issues and concerns, demanding immediate and strategic measures, policies, interventions, and initiatives to enhance the status and prospects of young people.

CHALLENGES AND NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY THE EYSET CONSORTIUM

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

The challenge of youth unemployment persists as a pressing concern across various regions, reflecting a multifaceted issue that requires targeted interventions. Young people, including those with disabilities, encounter barriers that hinder their entry into the workforce, resulting in a significant gap between their aspirations and attainable employment opportunities.

Lack of accessible, high-quality training programs, the lack of resources for life and career guidance, inadequate collaboration between educational institutions and relevant authorities – labour market, scarcity of internship opportunities and work experience, unequal access to technology, and limited of tools for identifying opportunities have contributed to this challenge. Moreover, the economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic have further exacerbated the issue, demanding immediate and sustainable solutions.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

A range of challenges are faced also in accessing and providing training and education.

- AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING SERVICES

Amidst the pursuit of equipping youth with the skills they need to succeed in the workforce, the challenge of ensuring the affordability and accessibility of training services stands as a crucial barrier to overcome. As young individuals seek opportunities to enhance their employability and entrepreneurial prospects, inadequate financial resources coupled with the varying costs associated with different training modules significantly create disparities in accessibility, limiting the potential impact of training initiatives on youth empowerment.



The challenge is amplified for young people with disabilities as they encounter physical barriers due to inadequate infrastructure, a lack of essential assistive technologies, and limited specialised support. Attitudinal barriers and negative perceptions about disabilities also contribute to an unwelcoming environment. Additionally, inaccessible curriculum materials and transportation challenges further hinder their educational opportunities. Financial constraints related to specialised equipment and accommodations pose an additional burden. Also, insufficient policies and practices that promote inclusivity and accommodate the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities are a significant barrier.

- TAILORED AND RELEVANT TRAINING TOPICS, PROGRAMS, AND CURRICULA TO ENHANCE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND ENCOURAGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In the face of rapidly changing technological landscapes and shifting economic trends, the lack of alignment between training programs and educational curricula with industry requirements and the aspirations of young individuals has emerged as a significant barrier to youth empowerment. Furthermore, the absence of entrepreneurship topics in the formal education curricula and the lack of relevant, up-to-date, and effective, programs, training materials, and modules to equip young individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in their chosen career paths or entrepreneurial ventures, have affected the successful social and labour inclusion of young people. Social and cultural norms, mental health concerns, and limited networking opportunities further compound these challenges. Additionally, lack of information, technological barriers, and time constraints impede young people's educational pursuits.

INCLUSIVITY

The inclusivity challenges identified by the project lie especially in two main barriers such as:

- INCLUSIVE SERVICES FOR DIVERSE YOUTH GROUPS

Inclusivity is another challenge faced by youth that pertains to the difficulty in ensuring that all young individuals, regardless of their background, abilities, or circumstances, have equal access to opportunities, resources, and support systems. This encompasses various dimensions, including social, economic, educational, and cultural factors. Young individuals, each with their unique backgrounds, needs, and circumstances, require support services that are not only accessible but also culturally sensitive, linguistically and geographically inclusive.

- INCLUSION OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Young individuals with disabilities often encounter barriers that hinder their access to education, skill development, and employment opportunities. These challenges stem from inadequate support systems, inaccessible training programs, lack of planning for disabilities, lack of adequate infrastructure and facilities, and a lack of tailored resources. Discrimination, limited accessibility, and a lack of awareness about the unique needs of



these youth compound their difficulties in entering the workforce. The absence of inclusive policies and accommodations further exacerbates the situation.

Overall discrimination, inequality, limited access to quality education and healthcare, lacking and contradicting information, lack of mentorship programs and tailored opportunities, benefit trap and, exclusion from economic and social activities represent significant obstacles hindering the progress of young individuals, demanding swift and decisive intervention.

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Promoting social entrepreneurship among young individuals, including those with disabilities, presents a multifaceted challenge that requires careful consideration from decision-makers. Social entrepreneurship holds the potential to not only address youth unemployment but also contribute to societal well-being.

Young entrepreneurs face several significant barriers, including limited access to financial resources, limited experience, competitive landscape dominated by established players, regulatory complexities, legal and bureaucratic constraints, risk aversion, lack of awareness on the topic and opportunities, lack of entrepreneurship culture, lack of guidelines and services to start a business, lack understanding of the steps and development process and a lack of mentorship and networking opportunities. These challenges collectively impede the progress of young entrepreneurs in establishing and growing successful ventures.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Establishing initiatives in the tourism sector, especially those focused on sustainable practices, encounter significant challenges for both young individuals and those with disabilities. The intricate landscape of the tourism industry, coupled with the existing barriers to entry, hinders their ability to create and sustain impactful ventures. Limited access to training tailored to the sector's dynamics, lack of perception of tourism not only as a seasonal opportunity but as a sustainable alternative, lack of awareness of opportunities, lack of awareness and promotion of sustainable and tourism alternatives, limited accessibility of touristic places for YWDS, lack of incentives of solving the limitations to accessibility, coupled with a lack of financial resources and mentorship programs, form a substantial impediment. This challenge is further amplified when aiming for sustainable tourism practices, as adhering to eco-friendly standards and responsible tourism principles requires specialized knowledge and resources. Also, regulatory complexities in navigating licensing, permits, and adhering to industryspecific regulations demand time and resources, potentially slowing down the establishment and growth of their initiatives. Moreover, for young people with disabilities, the lack of inclusivity in tourism and entrepreneurship compounds these difficulties.



YOUTH ORGANISATIONS SERVICES / SUPPORT

Youth organizations also grapple with various challenges in their mission to support and provide services for young people. These hurdles include securing consistent funding, staying relevant and engaging, ensuring diversity and inclusion, navigating technology, and addressing mental health concerns. Additionally, forming and sustaining partnerships, advocating for youth-friendly policies, and measuring program impact pose ongoing difficulties. Equipping staff with necessary skills and actively involving young people in decision-making processes are also crucial, alongside ensuring safety and well-being. Also, as the focus on enhancing youth support services intensifies, the challenge of ensuring the quality and sustainability of these services emerges as a pivotal obstacle. The efficacy of support services in facilitating meaningful youth engagement and empowerment hinges on the presence of experienced professionals and a commitment to continuous improvement.



5. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In the pursuit of empowering youth and cultivating an environment conducive to their meaningful engagement in the workforce, this section addresses a series of policy recommendations aimed at local, national, and European authorities vested with decision-making authority. The focus of these recommendations is to address the critical issue of youth unemployment by bolstering support services. The ultimate goal is to narrow the existing gap between young individuals and gainful employment opportunities, through exploitation of social entrepreneurship and resources in the tourism sector. By nurturing entrepreneurship among young people and young people with disabilities, this document aspires to accelerate their integration into both the labour market and society, thereby fostering sustainable economic growth and holistic community development.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OBJECTIVES

ENHANCE JOINT SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS COMMON CHALLENGES:

The recommendations seek to foster the development of collective solutions for shared challenges related to the social and labour inclusion of young people and young people with disabilities.

LEVERAGE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND TOURISM:

By promoting the utilisation of social entrepreneurship and tapping into the resources embedded within the tourism sector, the document aims to foster the fast-track integration of young people and YWDs into the labour market.

CREATE AND RAISE AWARENESS OF TOOLS:

The document underscores the importance of fostering awareness of and creating useful, practical tools that enhance social and labour inclusion of young people exploiting social entrepreneurship in the tourism value chain.

CREATE A SUITABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE TRANSFER AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT:

The policy recommendations endeavour to foster a suitable environment that encourages the transfer of project results and ensures the long-term sustainability of project outcomes.



5.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO BOOST YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

DEVELOP, IMPROVE AND ENACT TARGETED POLICIES & STRATEGIES TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Craft and implement *purposeful policies and strategies* to overcome barriers to workforce entry and combat youth unemployment. In light of the findings from the assessment of previous implemented strategies, it is imperative to develop *enhanced strategies that encompass innovative measures and initiatives* to address existing challenges and improve the overall situation. Tailor these measures meticulously, ensuring they *provide specific solutions and equip young individuals with the essential skills, resources, and opportunities* for successful integration into the labour market, especially in significant industries with growing potential such as tourism. It is also crucial that the *endorsed strategies are implemented with precision, accuracy, and impartiality*, ensuring they are not only commendable initiatives on paper but are actively executed in reality and therefore have commendable results as well.

ENHANCE COLLABORATION AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE FOR SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Facilitate cooperation among institutions and peers at national and international levels, fostering the exchange of successful policies, strategies, and initiatives that have proven effective in promoting employment, and self-employment through entrepreneurship in the tourism sector.

FORGE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTITIES TO FOSTER AN EXPANDED JOB MARKET

Insufficient job availability stands as a primary driver of youth unemployment. Hence, it is important to *establish and nurture collaborative endeavours between government. private sector, and non-profit organisations*, dedicated to generating more job openings and expanding employment opportunities. Fostering synergies between different sectors, can contribute to the identification of the employment opportunities, assess the skills and needs of the job market, match the existing skills of young people with appropriate employment, and initiate training programs tailored to industry needs, amplifying the employment possibilities. Such collaborations not only address the challenges of youth unemployment but also contribute to sustainable solutions that benefit both individuals and the broader economy. Networking is also a vital component of job search and employment success. <u>Creating platforms that bring all the actors together and connect job seekers with industry professionals, mentors, and potential employers</u> can significantly enhance employment prospects.



PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE CONTINUES LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INFORMAL, NON-FORMAL EDUCATION, AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR YOUTH SKILL ENHANCEMENT

Encouraging a <u>culture of continuous learning and professional development</u> is crucial in today's dynamic job market. This initiative aims not only to retain their existing skill sets but also to broaden and diversify their competencies, thereby enhancing their qualifications for the job market. It is necessary to <u>promote and incentivize accessible</u> <u>informal and non-formal education</u>, along with <u>vocational education programs tailored</u> to the unique needs of young individuals. Vocational education can impart essential skills to young individuals, fostering self-employment and entrepreneurship, especially within the tourism value chain.

CREATE A FAVOURABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR A SMOOTH TRANSITION INTO EMPLOYMENT

The shift from a student to a working professional is a major transition for young people, often accompanied by various difficulties that may impact their successful integration into the workforce. Therefore, it is necessary to establish and <u>deliver specialized</u> services dedicated to providing comprehensive mental, social, and skill-based support to facilitate this transition effectively. These services are significant in ensuring a smooth and effective entry into the workforce particularly for young people with disabilities who may encounter additional barriers. <u>Collaborating with youth organizations</u> can be instrumental in identifying those in need of support, while also gaining deeper insights into their specific challenges and needs.

STRENGTHENING AND PROMOTION OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT FACILITATION INFRASTRUCTURES (RYG)

Ensure the effective implementation, and promotion of existing opportunities, particularly the Reinforced Youth Guarantee (RYG), especially in Western Balkans (WB). Given the recent implementation of this initiative in the WB, there is a vital need for targeted promotional efforts and awareness raising among youth service providers and the young population, to better understand its role and the opportunities it presents for young people. Additionally, for its successful uptake, active engagement of youth workers and youth organizations is imperative in facilitating the assessment and provision of services within the framework of the RYG initiative.



Enhance programs, prioritizing the connection of YWDs job seeker with potential employers and provide ongoing support in areas like resume building, interview preparation, and workplace adaptation.

PROMOTE APPRENTICESHIPS AND INTERNSHIPS IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM SECTOR

Encourage partnerships between educational institutions and businesses to offer apprenticeship and internship programs in tourism sector, providing hands-on experience and facilitating smoother transitions of young people into the workforce. Integrating and putting an emphasis on mentorship in the ongoing process of internship, providing directions to young people to explore their talents, and understand which direction they would like to go.

STRENGTHEN AND RAISE AWARENESS ON CAREER COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE

<u>Enhance the existing career counselling</u> services in educational institutions to help young individuals make informed decisions about their educational and career paths, being in line with their aspirations and job market needs. This involves <u>presenting and providing these services in an attractive manner tailored to engage young people effectively</u>. Simultaneously, there is a need to <u>increase awareness among young people about the significance of these services</u>, emphasizing how they can empower young individuals to make smart and strategic career choices that will facilitate and boost their employment.

ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES, YOUTH SERVICE PROVIDERS AND LABOR MARKET TO ALIGN CURRICULA WITH JOB DEMANDS

While universities possess significant expertise and resources, there exists a gap in effectively channelling these assets to support youth employment. The lack of collaboration between youth service providers and educational institutions limits the availability of specialised training programs that bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical skills demanded by the job market. Simultaneously the collaboration between universities and labour market should be strengthened, focusing on refining the university curricula and employing the necessary tools to effectively prepare young people for their forthcoming careers, <u>aligning their skills with the demands of the job market.</u> A particular attention should be put also on <u>aligning vocational education in the field of tourism with the changing trends and specific labor market demands in each country.</u>



INVEST IN DIGITAL LITERACY AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

<u>Provide training and resources</u> to ensure young people are proficient in using <u>professional digital tools and technologies</u>, which are increasingly essential in the modern job market.

STIMULATE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN KEY SECTORS

<u>Prioritize industries with high growth potential, such as tourism, technology, renewable energy, and healthcare</u>, to create more job opportunities for young individuals. Implement <u>awareness campaigns and educational initiatives to enlighten young people about the potential</u> within these industries, offering comprehensive knowledge, information, education, and training to enable their successful participation in these sectors.

5.2 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO EMPOWER YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

PROVIDE POLICY AND REGULATORY SUPPORT FOR YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TOURISM

Addressing regulatory hurdles is crucial to promoting social entrepreneurship. Decisionmakers should review and adapt policies that hinder the growth of social enterprises. This includes <u>simplifying business registration processes</u>, <u>providing tax incentives</u>, <u>and</u> <u>creating favourable regulatory frameworks that recognize the dual nature of social and</u> <u>economic objectives in these ventures</u>.

RAISE AWARENESS AND EDUCATE ON SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

A significant barrier to the growth of social entrepreneurship in tourism is the lack of awareness and education about its potential. Decision-makers should <u>promote</u> entrepreneurship as an alternative to self-employment and <u>invest in awareness</u> campaigns and educational programs that highlight the benefits of social entrepreneurship, showcase success stories, and provide training in areas such as business planning, impact measurement, and sustainable practices. Promotion of social entrepreneurship concept among YWDs is crucial, as it does not only offer the opportunity to create meaningful change in the world, but it also provides a way to pursue financial independence, self-determination, and an opportunity for a more flexible working life.



FOSTER A COLLABORATIVE ECOSYSTEM FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Fostering a collaborative ecosystem is essential for social entrepreneurship to thrive. Decision-makers can <u>establish incubators</u>, <u>co-working spaces</u>, <u>and innovation hubs</u> that facilitate networking, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas among young entrepreneurs. Additionally, <u>partnerships between educational institutions</u>, <u>private sector entities</u>, <u>NGOs</u>, <u>and government agencies</u> can create an ecosystem that supports young entrepreneurs in their social ventures.

FACILITATE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR YOUTH SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Establish a comprehensive financial support system specifically aimed at nurturing the development of social innovative ideas into successful social ventures. This includes providing grants for the initial phases, as well as <u>offering information and raising awareness on existing various financial resources and opportunities</u> for youth initiatives, such as crowdfunding etc. Also, <u>awareness should be raised regarding exploitation of EU opportunities targeting SE and Social Innovation</u>. However, <u>financial independence of SEs through sustainable economic activities should be encouraged</u>, for them to not only rely on funds and government support.

ESTABLISH A YOUTH EMPOWERMENT FUND FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS

<u>Create a dedicated fund aimed at enhancing the capabilities of young entrepreneurs</u> within the Social Enterprise (SE) sector. The fund should be allocated to facilitate capacity-building initiatives, foster diversification, and facilitate knowledge exchange through travel and study visits to successful SEs. This program will provide invaluable inspiration and equip young entrepreneurs with practical insights to implement and replicate successful SE models, fostering innovation and driving positive social and environmental impact.

INTEGRATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP FORMALLY INTO EDUCATION SYSTEM (TRADITIONAL AND NON – FORMAL EDUCATION)

Promote the <u>inclusion of entrepreneurship in education at all levels of the academic</u> <u>system</u>, starting from early education to university. Facilitating a nationwide coordination effort focused on the skills, competencies, and training required for social entrepreneurship. This involves establishing <u>a framework to identify and comprehend</u> <u>the essential skills and competencies</u>, aiming to <u>design tailored curricula and training</u> <u>programs</u>. This initiative will equip students with the requisite knowledge and skills necessary for the establishment of successful Social Enterprises (SEs), fostering an environment that emphasizes the importance and potential of entrepreneurship among the youth. <u>Tools such as EntreComp and GreenCom should be more widely included in</u>



the framework design of WB education policies. Also, it is crucial to develop a getaway, a centralized hub for information to provide comprehensive information and resources for youth interested in initiating a social business.

FOSTER PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR YOUTH-LED SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Establish contact points or communication channels with professionals and industry experts to assist young people in navigating the bureaucratic processes involved in initiating new social enterprises within the tourism sector. This entails <u>creating direct</u> <u>connections with professionals who can provide guidance and support youth</u> <u>entrepreneurs</u>, helping them navigate administrative and regulatory complexities effectively, ensuring a smoother and more informed path for the establishment of social enterprises.

ADVANCE FINANCIAL LITERACY AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCES AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

In addition to ongoing education and training programs on social entrepreneurship, the government and civil society sector should <u>put special attention to implementing</u> programs that enhance financial knowledge and management hard and soft skills among young people, equipping them with the information needed to navigate financial aspects of starting and running a business.

5.3 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE THE INCLUSION OF YWDS

DESIGN, ENFORCE AND MONITOR INCLUSIVE POLICIES

To ensure inclusivity in all areas, it is imperative to <u>design policies that cater to the</u> <u>unique needs of young people with disabilities (YWDs)</u>. This can be achieved by <u>involving responsible parties</u>, such as experts, youth organisations specialising in disabilities or youth workers directly working with young people with disabilities and even young people with disabilities, <u>as key stakeholders in the policy-making process</u>. Their insights and expertise can lead to the creation of more tailored opportunities and inclusive policies for specific disabilities (e.g., intellectual, physical, etc.). Additionally, <u>strict adherence to existing legislation and rights</u> is crucial to guarantee that these policies are effectively implemented and that the rights of individuals with disabilities are upheld. Therefore, <u>a system for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of</u> <u>policies and programs</u> aimed at empowering youth with disabilities should be implemented, making the necessary adjustments based on feedback and outcomes.



PRIORITISE AWARENESS AND INCLUSIVITY

To empower youth with disabilities, it is crucial to implement initiatives that focus on raising awareness about their rights and available opportunities. This can be achieved through targeted campaigns, educational programs, and community outreach initiatives. Additionally, policies should emphasise the importance of fostering a culture of inclusivity that embraces diverse languages and cultures.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TAILORED FOR YWDS

Difficulties in accessing information, training, and mentorship programs are one of the main obstacles encountered by YWDs. To ensure equal access, participation, and opportunities it is necessary to establish specialised skill development programs tailored to the unique abilities and needs of young people with disabilities. Many training facilities lack proper accessibility features, hindering the participation of young people with disabilities. Therefore, it is crucial to enforce accessibility standards in all training facilities, ensuring that they are physically and digitally accessible for individuals with disabilities. Also, all the information, training sessions, workshops, and educational materials should be available in accessible formats to individuals with disabilities, incorporating features like sign language interpretation, Braille, and digital accessibility features, necessary for equal access to resources.

ENFORCE REGULATIONS THAT MANDATE WORKPLACE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR YWDS

Workplace environments often need <u>modifications and adequate infrastructure to</u> <u>accommodate</u> individuals with disabilities. By setting <u>policies and clear guidelines</u>, that <u>regulate and enforce adequate workplace infrastructure adapted according to the needs</u> <u>of YWDs</u>, authorities can create an inclusive work environment and ensure their full participation and contribution.

FOSTER INCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION: RAISE AWARENESS AND PROMOTE POSITIVE ROLE MODELS AND SUCCESS STORIES OF YWDS

<u>Promote success stories of YWDs</u> through <u>traditional and online media campaigns</u> to amplify their accomplishments, increase visibility, demonstrate possibilities, inspire others, challenge stereotypes, encourage greater participation and create a more inclusive and encouraging environment for young people with disabilities to pursue their aspirations.



To foster greater inclusion of youth with disabilities is essential to <u>exploit and optimise</u> <u>usage of digital technologies</u>. This can be achieved through the <u>development of</u> <u>accessible digital platforms</u>, tools, and resources tailored to the specific needs of YWDs. Moreover, <u>offering comprehensive training and support to both youth with disabilities</u> and the organizations assisting them in the adept utilization of these technologies is of paramount importance.

5.4 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO FOSTER SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INITIATIVES

PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INITIATIVES

<u>Provide financial support in the form of grants or targeted funding programs, subsidies,</u> <u>or low-interest loans to tourism businesses</u> that demonstrate a commitment to sustainable practices, particularly those targeting young people.

INTRODUCE POLICY INCENTIVES TO SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVES IN TOURISM

Provide <u>regulatory flexibility and policy incentives</u>, such as <u>tax breaks or preferential</u> <u>treatment in procurement processes</u>, for startups and businesses that focus on ecotourism and sustainable travel experiences to encourage the development of innovative and sustainable initiatives that contribute to the growth of the tourism industry.

PROVIDE TAILORED TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Develop <u>specialised training programs focused on the intricacies of the tourism sector</u>, catering to the needs of young people and YWDs. <u>Customising and shaping the skill</u> <u>development of young people according to their specific competencies (language and digital skills)</u>. <u>Training and supporting services</u> should be provided <u>directly to young people</u>, through individual work with experts, and professionals (accountant, lawyers etc) to support and guide the start-up phase. These programs should comprise <u>sustainable practices</u>, accessibility standards, and regulatory compliance.

PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARENESS

<u>Establish strong networks</u> among organizations and bodies to <u>raise awareness and</u> <u>promote sustainable tourism among youth</u>, leveraging their sensitivity to the environment and inclusivity, to further enhance the tourism industry. Undertaking initiatives like <u>mapping practices and their promotion</u> helps to increase awareness of



existing opportunities and serve as inspiration for others. Additionally, establishing awards and recognition programs is essential for celebrating and showcasing the achievements and valuable contributions of young entrepreneurs and workers, particularly those with disabilities, within the tourism sector. Public awareness campaigns should be launched to highlight the benefits and opportunities associated with sustainable tourism practices, emphasizing the potential for long-term, year-round employment in the tourism sector. Visibility and the promotion of the tourism sector and YWDs working in it, can challenge stereotypes, inspire others, and promote a positive image of disability and entrepreneurship. Furthermore, fostering an exchange of best practices, particularly with a dedicated emphasis on inclusion through mechanisms like study visits and participation in relevant fairs, can inspire others and contribute to building a supportive ecosystem for social entrepreneurship.

INVEST IN RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION TO CRAFT ADEQUATE POLICIES

Invest in research initiatives to gather data on the challenges faced by young entrepreneurs with disabilities in the tourism sector. Direct engagement of YWDs in the identification of the challenges and opportunities in designing and establishing new ventures in the field of tourism, can guide evidence-based policy decisions and provide insights into areas that need improvement. Research and innovation grants are crucial also for funding research initiatives that focus on sustainable tourism practices, encouraging innovation in the industry, and providing young researchers with opportunities to contribute to its growth.

ENHANCE ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY FOR YWDS IN TOURISM

Advocate for <u>inclusive policies and practices within the tourism sector</u>, emphasising the importance of accommodating individuals with disabilities and creating equal opportunities for all. Implement <u>measures to enhance accessibility in tourist destinations</u> for YWDs, ensuring they can fully participate in tourism-related activities. This includes <u>infrastructure improvements and inclusive design principles</u>. Set and enforce <u>accessibility standards and guidelines for online platforms</u>, websites, and booking <u>systems</u> used in the tourism sector. This ensures that individuals with disabilities can access information and services effectively, fostering equal opportunities for participation.

ESTABLISH MENTORSHIP AND NETWORKING PROGRAMS

Establish mentorship programs that connect young entrepreneurs and individuals with disabilities with experienced industry professionals. This facilitates knowledge transfer, provides guidance, and helps navigate regulatory complexities.



INFORM ON AND SIMPLIFY REGULATORY PROCESSES

Inform young people on the necessary documentation and regulatory procedures, to start tourism-related initiatives. Facilitate and simplify the process of obtaining licences and permits for ventures in the tourism sector. Provide clear guidelines and resources to navigate industry-specific regulations, reducing administrative burdens.

CULTIVATE RESILIENT TOURISM ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH SUPPORTING PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING RISKS AND CHALLENGES IN TOURISM SECTOR INITIATIVES

To empower aspiring entrepreneurs in the tourism industry, it is imperative to launch extensive awareness campaigns addressing the associated risks of starting an initiative in this sector. These campaigns should encompass <u>informative workshops</u>, <u>seminars</u>, <u>and educational materials</u> that shed light on potential challenges and <u>equip entrepreneurs</u> with the knowledge and tools to navigate them effectively. Fostering a culture of risk awareness allows to better prepare and support young people in their entrepreneurial endeavours within the tourism sector.

INCENTIVIZE YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO ENGAGE IN TOURISM

Encourage young people and YWDs to participate, work, and engage in entrepreneurial initiatives in the tourism sector, by offering <u>incentives that go beyond minimum wage</u>. This could include <u>competitive salaries</u>, financial rewards, and additional benefits <u>tailored to the specific needs</u> and aspirations of these individuals.

5.5 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO EMPOWER YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

ENCOURAGE YOUTH SERVICE PROVIDERS TO ATTRACT FINANCIAL SUPPORT THROUGH STRATEGICALLY EMBEDDING YOUTH INITIATIVES WITHIN BROADER THEMES SUCH AS TOURISM TRANSITION PATHWAY, GREEN DEAL, TWIN TRANSITION, ETC

Educate and incentivize youth service providers to enhance their funding prospects by incorporating youth programs and project proposals, <u>under overarching themes such as climate change, social economy, tourism transition pathways, and green and digital agenda</u>. By weaving youth involvement into larger initiatives and within broader topics that align with EU priorities and national/local government priorities, like empowering local communities or small businesses in sectors such as agriculture or sustainable



tourism, youth service providers can ensure a more comprehensive and transversal approach that promotes diverse elements. This not only facilitates the inclusion of youth in diverse fields but also enhances the chances of attracting financial support.

RECOGNIZE YOUTH WORK AS A PROFESSION AND INCORPORATE IT INTO THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH WITHIN THE WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES

To strengthen the status and recognition of youth work as a legitimate profession, it is essential to <u>formally acknowledge and incorporate</u> it into the youth <u>legislative framework</u> within the Western Balkan countries. This involves officially designating youth work as a recognized and valued profession, complete with defined roles, responsibilities, and standards. By embedding youth work into the legislative framework, it ensures that the contributions of youth workers are officially acknowledged, and that the profession is afforded the necessary support, resources, and institutional recognition. This recognition can lead to the development of guidelines, ethical standards, and professional development opportunities, further enhancing the quality and impact of youth work in the region.

ESTABLISH A QUALIFICATION PROGRAM FOR THE PROFESSION – YOUTH WORKER IN WB COUNTRIES

Formalize and elevate the professionalism of youth work in Western Balkan countries, by instituting a <u>comprehensive qualification program tailored for Youth Workers</u>. This program should outline the necessary qualifications, skills, and competencies needed, offering a <u>structured curriculum</u>, <u>combined with relevant practical training and experiential learning</u>. By establishing a qualification program, the aim is to standardize the education and training of youth workers, fostering a more consistent and effective approach to youth development initiatives across the region. Additionally, support continuous professional development through training, mentorship, or networking opportunities, both nationally and abroad to further reinforce and expand youth workers volunteers, and/or professionals' competencies.

EMPOWER YOUTH WORKERS: ENHANCE SKILLS IN PROJECT PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Implement training programs focusing on project proposal writing and execution specifically tailored for Youth Workers. Given that a significant portion of financial support for youth organizations is distributed through grants obtained via open-call applications, providing education on effective proposal development and implementation is essential.



ORGANIZE PEER-LEARNING EVENTS BETWEEN POLICYMAKERS AND YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS IN THE EU WITH PEERS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

These events should serve as platforms for networking, and mutual exchange, enabling policymakers to share insights, strategies, and best practices and establish cross-border cooperation related to youth engagement and development. Additionally, youth organizations can showcase their experiences and contribute valuable perspectives, fostering a dynamic and collaborative environment that promotes cross-cultural understanding and effective policymaking.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This document provides policy recommendations to foster an enabling environment for the social and labor inclusion of young people and young people with disabilities, exploiting social entrepreneurship and resources in the tourism value chain. The recommendations were developed by the EYSET project partners, with a focus on the critical need for a comprehensive and inclusive approach to addressing the challenges of young people and YWDs in pursuing employment, training opportunities, and starting their own sustainable enterprises in the tourism sector. The policy recommendations aim to promote job opportunities, enhance inclusive services for young people with disabilities, raise awareness, and facilitate and support youth entrepreneurship in tourism. The recommendations include peer-learning events between EU policymakers and youth organizations with peers in the Western Balkans, forming partnerships with public and private entities, promoting ongoing non-formal education and vocational education, facilitating smooth transition into employment, and prioritizing job opportunities in growing industries such as tourism. The document also highlights the importance of regulatory support for youth social entrepreneurship in tourism, designing curricula and integrating social entrepreneurship in formal education, offering professional guidance and support, and providing training on entrepreneurial, managerial, and financial skills for the establishment of successful enterprises. The recommendations suggest developing and implementing inclusive, accessible mentorship programs and services tailored for YWDs, regulating and enforcing adequate workplace infrastructure, promoting success work stories of YWDs, and prioritizing digital accessibility to foster a great inclusion of youth with disabilities. Furthermore, it is recommended to invest in research and data collection to craft adequate policies, provide financial support and introduce incentives for tourism initiatives, provide tailored training and skill development programs specific to the tourism sector, and raise awareness and promote sustainable tourism initiatives. Overall, the policy recommendations aim to ensure the socio-economic empowerment of young people and young people with disabilities, boost employment through social entrepreneurship in tourism, and provide inclusive and accessible services.



VALIDATION OF THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

During the final Conference of the EYSET project on 28-29 November in Brussels, the prepared policy recommendations were validated in a workshop with the present participants. The participants engaged in discussions, offering suggestions, ideas, solutions, and recommendations to address the challenges of young people in integrating into the labor market. The outcomes were compared with the prepared policy recommendations, revealing alignment between the suggestions and the prepared recommendations. Notably, new valuable suggestions emerged during this process, including proposals for job shadowing opportunities for young individuals, capacity-building initiatives for the private sector, training programs for tourist offices, and language courses aimed at enhancing the abilities of young entrepreneurs to operate in diverse international contexts.



Herein, you will find the description of the 8 consortium partners that have implemented the EYSET project.

IMPULSA IGUALDAD, former PLATAFORMA REPRESENTATIVA ESTATAL DE PERSONAS CON DISCAPACIDAD FISICA, PREDIF

IMPULSA IGUALDAD is a national, state-approved non-profit organisation founded in 1996. IMPULSA IGUALDAD runs programs and promotes initiatives on behalf of 2,5K people with severe physical disabilities. It boasts over thirty years' experience in this field through its 260 member federations covering 13 Communities. It actively works for the social and labour inclusion of people with disabilities, carrying on several programmes, projects and initiatives to boost their personal autonomy in all aspects of life, in defence of their rights, as well as activities to support social and labour inclusion. IMPULSA IGUALDAD also actively works to enhance accessible tourism, with several best practices in this field, it has a platform for accessible tourism resources in 16 countries. IMPULSA IGUALDAD implements national and EU-funded projects aimed to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities.

CONTROVENTO SOCIETA COOPERATIVA SOCIALE ONLUS, Controvento

Controvento Societa Cooperativa Sociale Onlus, Controvento is a non-profit organisation founded in 2015 in Catania (Sicily, Italy) by a team of young professionals working in the socio-psychological and educational field committed to invest resources and skills on their own territory, sharing the idea to create services aimed at promoting the social inclusion and quality of life for young people with intellectual disabilities and protecting the exercise of autonomy. Controvento promotes the culture of diversity through the realisation of a wide range of activities, such as: Socio-educational activities, educational paths for autonomy and work integration paths for young people with disabilities, coordinating the Work Placement Service, addressed to young people with intellectual disabilities who have finished school and want to enter the world of work. Furthermore, they offer support services to companies in the management of training, they use a participatory method that allows participants to play an active role and to enhance their professional experiences in order to consolidate their knowledge.

DIESIS NETWORK, Diesis

Founded in 1997, the **Diesis Network**, **Diesis** is one of the largest networks specialised in supporting the development of the social economy, social entrepreneurship, and social innovation. Diesis functions as a unique ecosystem, which creates and multiplies



its impact through a close collaboration with its members, who represent over 90,000 organisations and 1.2 million workers through major national federations and support networks. Diesis contributes to the growth of the social economy through sharing knowledge through peer learning, capacity building, cross-sectorial and cross-country exchanges of good practices and research. Sustainability and innovation are at the core of Diesis Network human centred approach. Through its initiatives, Diesis influences national, European and International policies. Diesis also promotes as a horizontal priority "open and innovative practices in a digital era", by developing a modern, integrated and holistic methodology based on e-learning and non-formal education, tailor-made to the needs of young prospective social entrepreneurs. Moreover, Diesis gives a great importance to sustainability and responsibility in tourism as it is a founding member of the EU Network EARTH (European Alliance for Responsible Tourism and Hospitality) in 2008 and ISTO in 2019. Plus, since 2020, Diesis's Executive President Gianluca Pastorelli is the Vice-President of International Social Tourism Organisation ISTO Europe Committee.

CABILDO INSULAR DE GRAN CANARIA, CGC

Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria, **CGC** is a local Public Administration, the governing body of the island, created in 1912 by Spanish National Law specific for the Canary Island. CGC is very active in the field of youth. They have their own competences, granted by the Canarian Law of Youth (2023) and manage programmes, activities and initiatives for young people, especially for those with fewer opportunities.

They have had an education and Youth department for more than 30 years, which aims to provide a comprehensive response to young people's needs between 12 and 30 years old, especially young people with fewer opportunities. One of the main resources of their department is the Youth Information Centre in Jinámar (Telde) which provides services (Youth Information Point, Study Rooms, Conference Rooms) and activities for the population of a neighbourhood with special needs. The main working areas of their department are: Youth Information (collect and dissemination), leisure time (travels and free time, healthy lifestyles), trainings for young people/youth workers, european Projects (Erasmus+ KA1, KA2 and KA3); promoting personal independence, specially targeted at the most disadvantaged youngsters; improving participation through associations; enhancing young people's inclusion, solidarity and respect. For more than 20 years they have been managing free time and leisure activities for youngsters with the aim of providing healthy options for the free time, and a learning environment for youngsters in a non-formal way. CGC has been implementing for young people.

FORUM FOR CIVIC INITIATIVES, FIQ

Since its establishment in 2001, as part of Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF) support to Kosovo, **Forum for Civic initiatives**, **FIQ** has evolved into becoming one of the leading organisations championing civic activism, social entrepreneurship, youth



volunteerism, support to other technical assistance and resource sharing for CSOs, and local philanthropy development. FIQ has worked with community safety and civic activism, in three broader strategic fields: Sustainable Development; Local Philanthropy and Grant-making. Even within existing target audiences of youth/students, startups and entrepreneurship, FIQ seeks to provide inclusive services and accessible material, opening its activities also to young people with disabilities. FIQ is engaged in identifying innovative ideas and development of the green economy despite guidelines for investment in coal; fostering the development of the legal framework and at the same time accelerating the self-employment program for youth, women, and girls; development and promotion of social entrepreneurship in all municipalities of Kosovo, development of an original model of startups in agriculture, environment, ICT, ecotourism; increasing advocacy capacities of local NGOs give FIQ the dimension of a hub - a center that welcomes needy citizens, youth organizations interested in developing their organizational capacities, environmental experts, employment, Kosovo journalists, Balkans Western, EU or beyond the continent with the primary aim of strengthening the civil society sector in Kosovo as one of the vital indicators of the quality of democracy in the country.

ASSOCIATION FOR DEMOCRATIC PROSPERITY - ZID, ADP-Zid

Association for Democratic Prosperity, Zid, ADP-Zid has a long standing experience, and as one of the notable NGOs in Montenegro, they have developed programs focused on the quality of life, development and social responsibility of all actors in the community. ADP is working on projects and activities within the following programs: entrepreneurship and youth employment, active measures and innovations for employment social economy and youth in entrepreneurship. Their, main activities are: contact point for Montenegro for EU Solidarity Corps and Erasmus+ program; education and mobility – offer to youth different educational program in Montenegro, SEE or EU; beside it they provide capacity building of youth organisations – In house training for Youth Organization; advocacy for youth issues – youth employment, economic independence, housing policy etc... They promote prosocial values and solutions that take care about social cohesion in society with particular focus on youth at risk of employment marginalisation according to socio-economic status and place of living.

PARTNERS ALBANIA FOR CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT, PA

Partners Albania for Change and Development, PA is an Albanian NGO, established in 2001. PA mission consist in the support of civil society and facilitation of inter-sector cooperation to strengthen democratic institutions and advance economic development in Albania. In their work of more than 20 years of experience PA combines local knowledge with innovative tools and techniques to provide support for communities, civil society organisations, government and business, and facilitating participatory processes to advance constructive change towards sustainable development. PA has



organised its interventions into four key programmatic areas: 1) Enabling Environment and Sustainable Development of Civil Society; 2) Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation; 3) Philanthropic activity and support infrastructure; 4) Transparent and accountable participatory governance. PA is a member of Partners Global, a network of 20 independent organisations globally, working for peaceful and democratic change, is also a member of several EU networks such as Euclid, and Diesis which supports the development of the social economy, entrepreneurship and innovation in Europe. PA is one of the founders of the first regional alliance of the social economy – SEEWEST: Social Economy Ecosystem in Western Balkans. Partners Albania works for the development of social entrepreneurship and social enterprises (SEs) through research to better understand the features and models of SEs along with their development challenges, aiming to educate all relevant stakeholders in supporting the role of SEs as a significant factor for the socio-economic advancement of the country. These instruments are in function of advocacy efforts for an enabling institutional and financial environment for SEs. PA has created a supporting mechanism model for start-ups providing seed funding, know-how, capacity building, mentoring and networking opportunities.

SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN YOUTH NETWORK, SEEYN

South East European Youth Network, SEEYN is a formal network that covers 12 countries of the South East European region. They empower CSOs and young people in the South East European region to engage in peace and reconciliation, community development, economic empowerment and solidarity programs through capacity building, advocacy, social innovations development and cooperation. They have experience in social entrepreneurship, social innovations and youth as they are implementing the program Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurship (RISE) that supports local incubators that have a program for youth social entrepreneurship in all Western Balkan countries. Also they have experience in terms of working with young people in fields such as youth activism, volunteering infrastructure, non-formal education, youth employment, mobility as well as social innovations, youth in community development etc. They have experience in developing European projects for defending youth.