



A BETTER FUTURE  
FOR THE ENTREPRENEURS:

# AN INNOVATIVE MODEL TO CO-CREATE HUBS FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Project website:

[www.se-hubs.eu](http://www.se-hubs.eu)



## PROJECT GOAL

The general purpose of the Co-creating Hubs for Social Enterprises (SEHUBS) project is to develop an innovative model of co-creating hubs for social enterprises (SE), working with various disadvantaged groups or toward overcoming social issues in various fields (culture, sport, employment, etc.), and to test its practical application in different local contexts. SE hubs operate as institutions for non-formal education and training that provide various types of support to management and operational staff of social enterprises with different social backgrounds. The beneficiaries of SE hubs' activities, the social enterprises (SEs) themselves, have proven to be a good practice for ensuring social inclusion. The SEHUBS project specifically aims at creating and testing into practice of an innovative SE co-creation hub model that will provide a comprehensive package of innovative trainings as well as operational practices and will serve as a generator for stronger and viable SEs' communities.



The model of the SE co-creation hub will combine components that address 1) the capacity-building needs of SEs in the area of applying inclusive training approaches for their staff; 2) the needs for exchange of experience and knowledge on integrating innovative non-formal inclusive and skill-based training programmes that are applied by SEs for their target groups; 3) the needs for gaining public acknowledgement and community trust in SE activities.

## INNOVATION

The specific innovations to be developed within the SEHUBS project include:

- inclusive training programme for SEs' staff management;
- inclusive fellowship training programmes for SE staff;
- community-based physical spaces that are shared among local SEs and help them access the community.

Co-creating an innovative SE hub model that is easily adaptable to the specifics of various local contexts will foster the future successful operational and expert development of SEs as organisations. It will also help them serve as sustainable inclusive training centres for various members of the communities regardless of their differences and background specifics. Consequently, it will help to build more inclusive societies where all members share common values and respect each-others' rights.

Additional objectives of the project are:

- selection and presentation of the best systemic and instrumental practices of functioning and supporting social enterprises in partner countries implementing the project and in the European Union
- selection and presentation of case studies and role models
- formulation of recommendations on mechanisms to activate, support, dynamise and develop cooperation of stakeholders involved in the processes of supporting the development of social enterprises in partner countries implementing the project and in the EU.

## BULGARIA

- Need for training and motivation of people working in SEs.
- The possibility for SEs to apply for state funding for training of newly or already employed personnel.
- Strategies oriented towards community for a greater social impact by establishing partnerships as key strategies for the development of SEs.
- Communication skills of social entrepreneurs offer the possibility to ensure sustainable employment of groups that cannot otherwise find support or motivation to enter the labour market.

## GREECE

- There is an increased acceptance and support towards SEs and their mission, both on the part of citizens and private funding entities.
- Through the contracts of the Socially Responsible Public Procurement strategy, public authorities will give to enterprises new incentives to develop socially responsible management.
- SEs can: (1) integrate people from vulnerable social groups into the labour market, (2) develop and restore the work skills of employees, (3) promote equality and employment diversity by combating all forms of discrimination, (4) develop the creative and productive abilities of individual employees, (5) establish a new field of cooperation.

## MAIN CHALLENGES FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISES (SE)

- Improving the competence of social entrepreneurs in running a social enterprise and managing human resources.
- Improving communication between social enterprises and support institutions serving both social entrepreneurs and people at risk of exclusion.
- Creating cooperation networks between public administration and third sector organisations.
- Creating support centres for social economy entities.
- Preparation of social campaigns informing about the idea of social enterprises in terms of supporting persons threatened by exclusion.
- Creating a system of financial and non-financial support for social entrepreneurs.
- Establishing a system of basic and specialised training for SE staff.

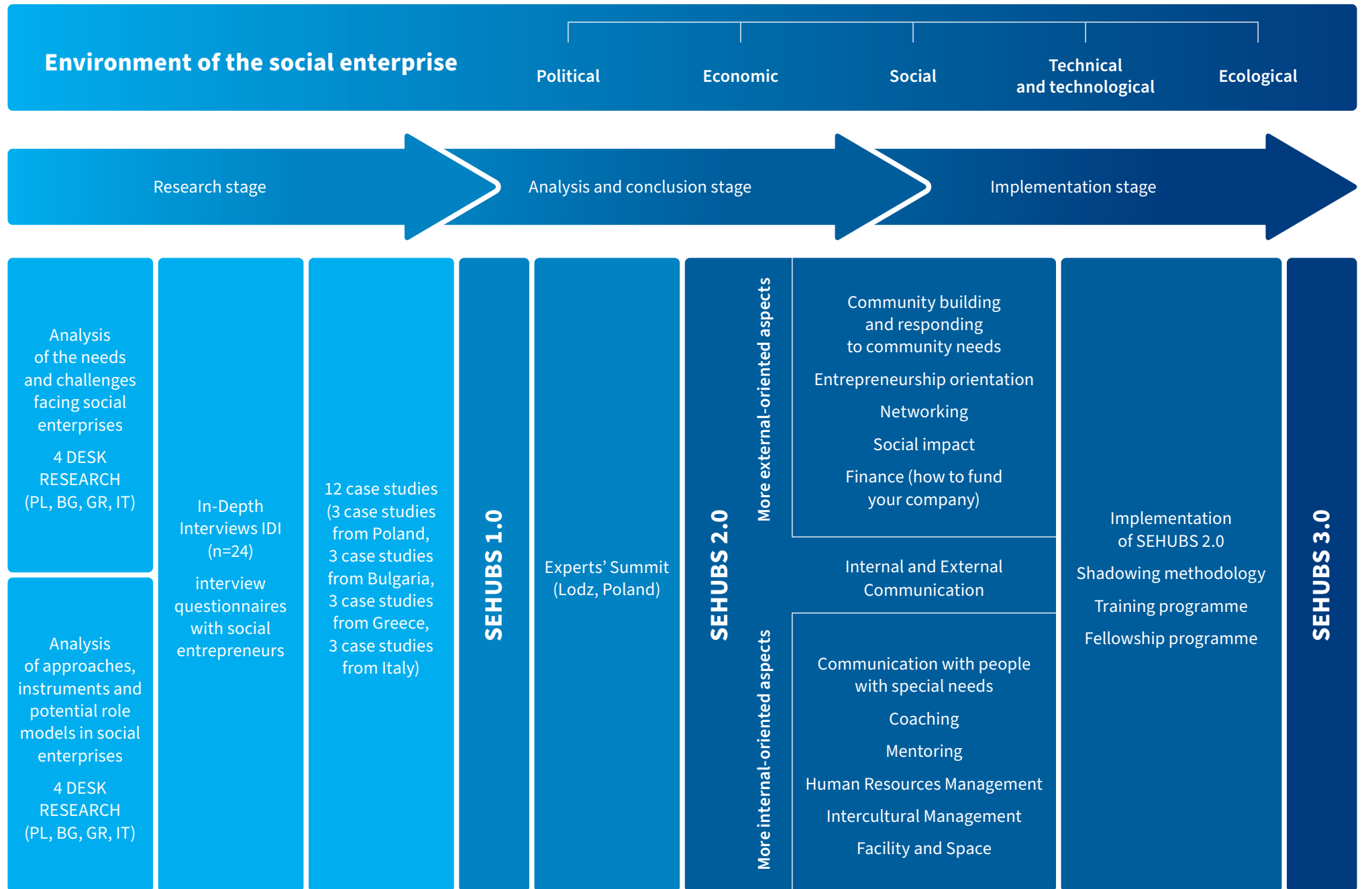
## ITALY

- A good level of 'loyalty' of NPOs staff, in particular their adherence to moral and ethical principles, the quality of work and company climate which made the prospect of working in the NPOs attractive.
- Non-profit operators compensate for lower remuneration, compared to for-profit or public enterprises, with so-called intangible benefits: fairness of remuneration, quality of relationships, democratic participation in the governance of companies, freedom of choice, flexibility of working hours, and adherence to the mission.
- The problem of assessing the social return of the interventions carried out by SEs or non-profit sectors still remains.

## POLAND

- SEs exist to do good and may treat their activity as a social mission or a moral absolute, and not as an economic activity, subject to the calculation of expenditure in relation to the profits or losses suffered.
- The need to implement training in the field of detailed regulations on social enterprises, risk management, group process management, and public speaking.
- The need for financial resources not only for infrastructure investments and working capital but also for the development of activities related to people and competencies: demand for training and consulting services, as well as for building cooperative consortia.

# THE VISION FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CO-CREATION HUB



The innovative SEHUBS model is designed to build a vision for social enterprise co-creation hubs that will provide comprehensive business support, know-how and training to social enterprises in Poland, Bulgaria, Greece, and Italy. The SEHUBS methodology uses a co-creation process that combines capacity building of social enterprises, the need to share expertise and integrate training to improve skills of social enterprise staff, and the need to gain social recognition and trust for social enterprise activities. The complexity of the objectives implies the interpenetration of research and application aspects.

The long research phase, which lasted nearly ten months, consisted of several steps. In the first phase of the project, the following was done: the identification of needs and challenges facing social enterprises in the project partner countries: Poland, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, and in the European Union (EU), as well and internationally, and the diagnosis of the legal conditions for the functioning of social enterprises in the project partner countries and in the EU. Moreover, the current support system for social enterprises in the project partner countries and the EU, with particular emphasis on the following three areas was identified and described: (1) recruitment process, retention and internal training (2) management of training facilities and expertise, and (3) distribution of products and services offered by social enterprises.

It was followed by the selection and presentation of the best system and tool practices for operating and supporting social enterprises in the project partner countries: Poland, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy with a focus on the three mentioned above areas. Another element was the selection and presentation of the best role models in these areas in the four countries.

In-depth interviews were an important activity in the research phase. Stakeholders were interviewed in Poland, Bulgaria, Greece, and Italy. Based on the interviews and material gathered in the previous stages, case studies were prepared.

On this basis, the SEHUBS model (version 1.0) was created. It was discussed during the meeting in Poland, which took place in Lodz in November 2021. The resulting SEHUBS model 2.0 includes, among the key areas of support for an inclusive approach, more outward-looking practices, i.e. community, and more inward-looking practices.

At this stage, there was a transition from the research phase to the analysis phase.

The model as it stands will be tested through a process of training, shadowing and fellowships. Based on that, adjustments will be made if necessary. The implementation phase will test the obtained model and will contribute to the final version of the SEHUBS model.

The activity of social enterprises takes place in an environment in which one can distinguish political, economic, social, technical and technological, as well as ecological aspects.

Main project outcomes are presented on the website:

[www.se-hubs.eu/resources](http://www.se-hubs.eu/resources)

I. Need Analysis

II. Role models

III. Best practices

IV. Case studies

## THE PARTNERS

All innovation and expertise that can be found in the SE-hubs project is the result of the participation of four highly qualified partners.



**PRISM** is a non-profit social enterprise with the mission to create equal opportunities for the responsible progress of societies, communities and people – acting as a qualified development agent, since 2012, with its operational seat in the city of Palermo and its registered office in Enna, Italy. PRISM represents a co-planning hub, open to public and private actors, for the elaboration of tailored development strategies and interventions, aimed at enhancing diversity and sharing the social, cultural and economic resources of local communities from an international perspective. The PRISM concept originates from the heart of the Sicilian inland, upon the initiative of professionals working in the field of intercultural cooperation and dialogue, both on an EU and international level.



**THE BULGARIAN CENTRE FOR NOT-FOR-PROFIT LAW** aka BCNL is a non-profit public benefit NGO based in Sofia, Bulgaria. Our mission is to support the development of enabling civil society framework so that people can enjoy their right of association and be able to actively collaborate for a better world. We are led by our strong belief that NGOs are key leaders of change towards independent, inclusive and prosperous communities. Being established in 2001, BCNL supports the development of society that is built on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights. In the last 10 years, BCNL has been developing a Social Entrepreneurship Programme that aims to inspire innovative cause-related business initiatives of NGOs as a way to expand their financial and capacity sustainability.



**THE ATHENS LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE** is a research and education institute based in Athens, Greece. Its mission is to foster and enhance innovation processes mainly in the areas of education and lifelong learning, human capital development, knowledge society, and social inclusion. The Athens Lifelong Learning Institute has been focusing on building entrepreneurial communities and providing support to innovators, dreamers and entrepreneurs who are ready to launch their ideas and create tangible solutions. It has persistently contributed to the development of an entrepreneurial community in its local context and has been offering support to potential entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurial community [accelerators, incubators, hubs etc.]. The Athens Lifelong Learning Institute has been contributing to the improvement of the entrepreneurial ecosystem through the development of sophisticated curricula and education/training materials targeting both entrepreneurs, by the delivery of customised training programmes and supporting services for potential entrepreneurs, and business advisors, by the delivery of capacity building activities.



**The UNIVERSITY OF LODZ**, established in 1945, is one of the leading institutions of higher education in Poland, ranked among the top higher education institutions in the country. Currently, around 28,000 students of all levels attend the University of Lodz, including 3,000 from abroad. The University of Lodz is also involved in numerous EU and national projects and initiatives supporting Entrepreneurship. The Faculty of Management, which is involved in this project, has ten departments and over 5,000 students. It is our strongly held belief that education has a transformative capacity and our role as a university is to equip and train the next generation of students with the requisite mindsets and skills essential for success in a changing world. The Department of Entrepreneurship and Industrial Policy carries out research in management-related sciences, including the area of social entrepreneurship. Another faculty contributing to this project is the Faculty of Economics and Sociology at our University. Among faculty members are experts in various research funding institutions, i.e. the National Centre for Research and Development or the National Science Centre.



Project duration: January 2021 - January 2023

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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

