

Handbook on Social Innovation and Good Practice Projects in the Area of Social Innovation



MINISTRY
OF INVESTMENTS, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
AND INFORMATIZATION
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Voluntary members of the Social Innovation Platform participating in the social innovation setting in the SR:





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Introduction





How did it all start?

The Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic came with the idea to bring together experts who have long been working on the topic of social innovations in Slovakia. Representatives of academia, foundations, businesses and other experts from the private and nongovernmental sector connect regularly through a dedicated Social Innovation Platform to interact on the topic of social or societal innovations in the regions. The development of the global pandemic caused by the COVID-19 disease moved personal meetings to the online environment. They were equally pleasant and efficient as ever. Nevertheless, we hope that the situation will improve in 2021 and personal meetings will be possible again and will be the most efficient way of communication and cooperation.

Why is social innovation important part of regional development?

The Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic is a central body of the state administration responsible for regional development including coordination of the preparation of regional development policies. Social innovations are an integral part of regional development and of the preparation of regional development policies in Slovakia, in the least developed districts, in the Recovery and Resilience Plan of the SR, as well as in the Partnership Agreement of the SR and Operational Programme Slovakia.

Why is it important to pool the experience and knowledge?

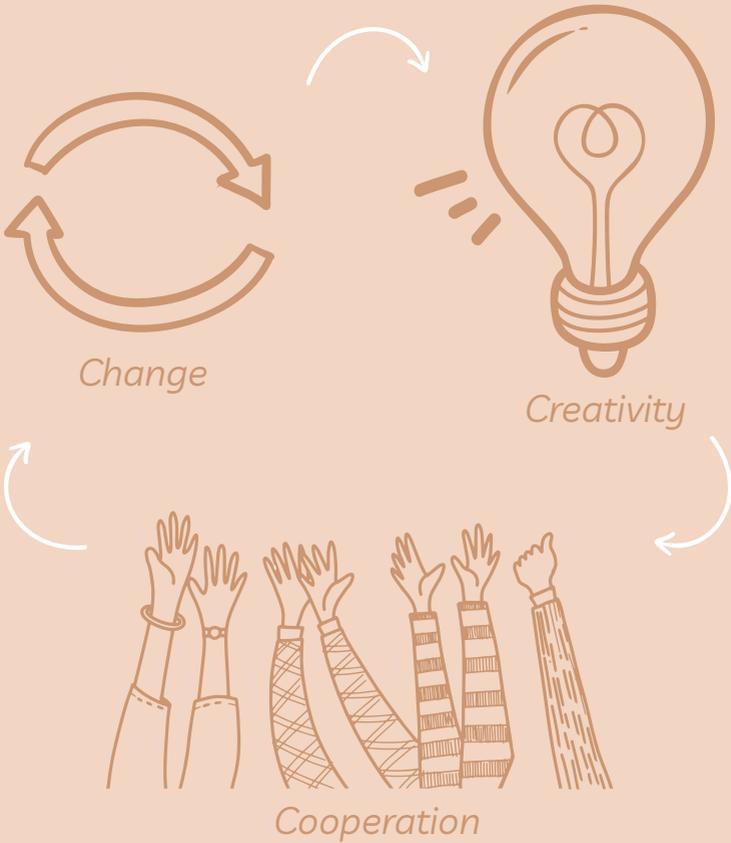
Mainly to be able to cooperate and capitalize on collected knowledge and experience earned through years of practice in the field of social innovations, and transpose them into positive societal change.

Why a Handbook on social innovations?

The Handbook defines main areas of social innovations, key notions and terms including examples of good practice in the area of social innovations in Slovakia and abroad. The topic of social or societal innovations, as the case may be, should enrich regional development with the most efficient and innovative solutions to social issues in the regions. This topic shows possibilities of innovative projects, which can be part of the strategies and their implementation in individual regions. At the same time, it shows more efficient options for financing of the projects that can change the quality of life in the society.

1

Definitions



Social innovations = societal innovations

Social innovations are societal innovations. When compared with available alternatives, social innovations represent new, more effective, efficient, sustainable and fair solutions to societal problems and societal needs. They may include the creation of new products and services, the introduction of technologies, and also the creation of new social processes, organisational structures, changes in the set rules or the creation of new roles in the social system. Their goal is a qualitative change in the life of society.

Social

The adjective “social” makes the impression that we talk about assisting the weak or excluded, that we talk about social assistance. The adjective “social”, however, is used in this Handbook in its broader meaning. It also means “societal” and relating to the society and activities beneficial for the society.

Main areas of social innovations:

- public health
- education and human development
- social mobility and inclusion
- unemployment services
- support to entrepreneurship
- the environment and regional development
- culture, creativity, development in communities
- effective public administration
- development of new technologies
- quality of life and financial literacy.



Types of change

Social innovations bring change in the organisation of a society and lead to positive social change. We distinguish four types of change:

Local change

It creates a positive social impact on the local community or target group (school, business, local clubs, excluded groups in the municipality) by providing them with direct services or products. Based on the recognition of the needs of the beneficiaries, they directly solve the most visible consequences of social problems (e.g. by building a playground in the municipality, through a project of career counseling for mothers on maternity leave, or local ecological waste management, etc.).

Network change

Providing direct services and products, while the positive impact in this case is multiplied by the fact that these services and products are used by several communities and target groups in several locations. They may or may not be interconnected (e.g. a network of playgrounds in the regions or several locations, career counselling centres for mothers on maternity leave in each district town etc.).

Systemic change

Systemic change aims to eliminate the real causes of societal problems rooted in the system. It creates a positive impact by changing the system and its setting, conditions, relations between actors, rules, roles of actors, or bringing new resources to the system to achieve better results (e.g. through new resources to municipalities, providing opportunity for systematically build new playgrounds, systematic creation of more flexible jobs suitable for mothers on maternity leave, etc.).

Framework change

It is social change in the society's mindset and the adoption of a new approach as the norm. In framework change, we try to influence

the perception of a problem in the society - for example, playgrounds will be a priority for the society, or the society will begin to perceive mothers on maternity leave as women who can work effectively; the concept of the acceptance of women's suffrage is often mentioned in this connection. Equally, it can be about the creation of a concept how to engage seniors in active life (e.g. through their voluntary work on the maintenance of parks or playgrounds) or about the creation of meeting areas for seniors (e.g. so-called playgrounds for seniors in children's playgrounds, which are popular abroad, e.g. installing fixed table-tennis tables, petanque, chess...).

Ecosystem of social innovations

An ecosystem is a complex environment in which social innovators or other change makers grow, develop and operate. A support system for social innovations is part of the ecosystem. Such a system includes various forms of support, from financial to educational and expert, or the form of platforms, networks and opportunities for collaboration, co-creation and a shared collective impact.

Change makers

Change maker

It is a person who can identify social problem or need and sees it as opportunity to find a solution. They are proactive and take steps to implement a solution.

Social innovators = societal innovators

These are people who can see a social problem, bring a systemic solution and take steps to its implementation. Several social innovators may indeed come from the environment of the social economy, within which they pursue primarily socially beneficial goals through their economic or non-economic activities. In some cases, a proposed



solution can bring a commercial success and can also become a social innovation - for example, an autonomous car. However, not all successful social innovators come from the social economy environment. The main goal of social entrepreneurs is not only to make a profit, but also generate a positive social impact.

According to Jacques Defourny, president of the European Research Network of Social Economy (EMES), “social enterprises are businesses with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally re-invested for that purpose or in the community and its development rather than driven by the need to maximize profits for shareholders and owners.” The European Commission defines social enterprise as an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social, environmental and general impact rather than make a profit for its owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services, education; it works with socially disadvantaged and disabled people, and uses its profits to achieve social objectives and organises groups of mutual assistance for activities in general interest.

Stakeholders

These are proponents as well as opponents, clients, advisors, employees, colleagues, people from the public administration or academia, and others.

- **Self-government** – Territorial self-government is an organisational form of public administration based on a territorial aspect. The basic organisational unit of the territorial self-government is a municipality (town). The higher component of a territorial self-government is a higher territorial unit (HTU – the English equivalent of „VUC“) or self-governing region.
- **Non-governmental organisations** – most social innovations in Slovakia currently come from the so-called third sector.
- **Philanthropic institutions** or corporate and individual change makers support social innovations in the form of grants and donations or as mediators of a pro-bono expert support.
- **Venture capital investors** – professionals in the field of investment focusing on big opportunities and social innovations with a proven

business model or a sufficiently large customer base and growth potential – in other words: scaling. Their investments range in millions of Euros. In return, they demand support for investments and guidance in the field of investments not for gaining a majority share or majority decision rights as a primary goal.

- **Angel investors and donors** – individual investors, often successful entrepreneurs, both men and women, searching for new social innovations with a growth potential. These investments range from tens to hundreds of thousands of Euros. They expect a minimum return on investment – at least the capital invested must be returned, ideally also something extra. The intention of these investors is key as they perceive social problems and are keen to change them for the better. Quite often, they offer both finance and consultations to make the investment more effective. This is a great added value for a business or organisation.
- **Others** – for instance the media.

Societal impact

It represents a measurable improvement in the societal problem and indicates the effect of social innovation on society. Focusing on the real impact on the society is a basic principle of the work of social innovators who are looking for ways to achieve the best possible impact on the society for as many people as possible with a minimum of resources. They use all available and completely new approaches, including those from the business world. There is a variety of ways to monitor and measure impact, with varying degrees of complexity.

The environment social innovators come from

Some social innovators may come from the very environment of the social economy, within which they pursue primarily socially beneficial goals, namely through their economic or non-economic activities. However, not all social innovators necessarily come from this environment; often they can be actors whose activities have a social impact, yet it is not their primary goal. In such a case, it may be the commercial success of a solution, which also happens to be a social innovation – an example of an autonomous car. Not all successful social innovators thus come from the environment of the social economy.

Social economy in the Slovak legislation

Legislation defines social economy as the sum of production, distribution or consumer activities carried out by means of economic activity or non-economic activity independently from the state authorities with the main objective to achieve a measurable positive social impact. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and the Family of the Slovak Republic defines social economy as follows: „Social economy can be defined and considered as part of the economy; it is governed by solidarity and its primary role of meeting social goals.“ Social economy plays an important role in tackling poverty, empowerment of disadvantaged groups and protection of the environment. Traditional economy often fails on these issues. Markets, left to their own forces, are not always able to provide for everyone, and their attention is mainly focused on financial indicators. Social and environmental impacts remain outside their economic equations. The social economy is thus a response to the shortcomings in the mainstream economy.

Social economy organisations and models help to create a more responsible, equitable and fairer economy. It is made of organisations that have a strong societal mission and reinvest much of their profits to achieve their social or environmental goals. They include all types of



non-profit organisations, but also companies, cooperatives and entrepreneurs, the so-called social entrepreneurs.

Social economy actors

A social economy actor is also an entity that performs an activity of the social economy – seeking in this particular activity primarily to achieve a socially beneficial goal, however not strictly with the intention of socialisation of the generated profit.

The social economy subjects have been defined by Act 112/2018 Coll. on social economy and social enterprises, as amended (the SEaSE Act). These are, for example, civic associations, foundations, non-investment funds, non-profit organisations, and church facilities with special purposes, business companies, cooperatives and natural persons - entrepreneurs who are employers. Such an entity:

- is not controlled or financed by the state;
- carries out economic activity or non-economic activity within the scope of activities in the area of the social economy;
- if it carries business or other gainful activity pursuant special regulations, it does not do so exclusively for the purpose of making a profit, or uses the profit generated from them in a manner pursuant to this Act.

For example, a commercial company may perform an activity of the social economy, but is not a social economy subject. In our understanding, however, it meets the criteria to be positioned as the social economy actor.

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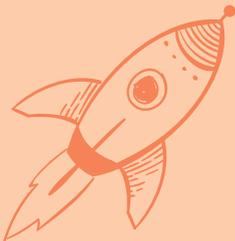
Important tools for achieving socially beneficial goals



Creativity



Passion



Leadership



Management



Motivation



Social entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship is indeed one of the important tools for achieving socially beneficial goals, which can have, and often do have, a social innovation dimension. In this case, however, it is primarily about achieving social innovations through the market, as opposed to social innovations in the context of strictly non-profit solutions.

Social entrepreneurship is a so-called hybrid business model as it combines the principles of classical profit-making business with the principle of societal benefits, which are mostly associated with non-profit activities. It has a long history in Western European countries. The social economy sector, in which social entrepreneurship takes place, creates up to 10% of GDP and 10% of all jobs in some national economies. Social entrepreneurs reinvest the generated profit back into their activities in order to create social benefits and contribute to positive social change. We can say they socialize profits.

1. Entrepreneurship

is a valuable skill that contributes to the personal and professional development of people. It is the ability to constantly bring and implement solutions to problems around us. Entrepreneurial people like to answer the question „How to do something“ and they do not lack the courage and ingenuity to find ways of doing things. In a social context, it is the ability to see the problems of a community, part of society or society as a whole and take steps to improve them.

2. Social business

is doing business with the aim to achieve a positive social impact. The basic concept of social business rests in carrying out economic activities with a primary goal focused on social value and economic

sustainability. Social business is a new integration concept covering multidimensional meanings. It can be, for example, the employment of homeless people. The essence of sustainability is in using profits primarily for further development.

Social entrepreneurs

A. Social impact enterprise

A social impact enterprise is a civic association, foundation, non-profit organisation, church facility with a special purpose, business company, cooperative or natural person - entrepreneur, who carry out economic activities on a continuous basis, independently, on their own behalf and under their own responsibility. Their main objective is to achieve a measurable positive social impact. They shall meet at least two of the following conditions:

- They contribute to a positive social impact with the goods or services, which they produce, supply, provide or distribute, or contribute to them through their production or provision; and
- If they gain profits from their activities, they use more than 50% of the profit after tax to achieve the main objective according to letter b);
- They distribute profit pursuant Commercial Code, according to the rules and procedures, which do not go against the main objective according to letter b);
- They involve stakeholders into management of their economic activities. (Source: Act 112/2018 Coll. on social economy and social enterprises, as amended).

B. Registered social enterprise

RSP means a statute – the highest level of social enterprise in the sense of the Slovak legislation. In terms of its activity, a registered social enterprise can be:

- integration enterprise;
- social housing enterprise; or
- other registered social enterprise.

4

Enhancement and expansion of solution

Activation of partnerships and scaling

Scaling in social innovations:

1. Activities for the needs of the state and private sector, including a budget allocated for social innovations.

2. Establishing contacts with state institutions and other stakeholders in the innovation ecosystem in the relevant country; assisting Slovak businesses in their search for partners and – in the initial stage – helping them to enter into the international markets.

3. Proposing public-private financing of projects in the field of social innovations.

4. Promoting regional cooperation (e.g. V4 + countries with essential change in the system of social innovations.

5. Presenting the SR from the perspective of already implemented projects in the field of social innovations at innovation forums, international conferences and seminars.

6. Contribution to the implementation of bilateral agreements and memoranda of cooperation; preparation and implementation of innovative entrepreneurial missions.

7. Other specific tasks of the project for the needs of the state and private sector.

Enhancement and development of functional communities

Enhancement and development of functional communities as well as efforts to create better relations and systems will ensure the development and support for areas in which we live and where we create a better environment for our lives and lives of our loved ones. The unique styles of each of us can provide an opportunity for the return of creative thinking to the society, which can help to make a positive difference and implement change with the contribution of each of us.

Functional community

A community able to communicate in an open way and cooperate in achieving common development goals in a given location where it lives and enhances its resources. Through its sustainable activities, it ensures the social reproduction of community values and identities. It protects, develops and uses common local resources in a sustainable way. It is geographically defined by a community-designated location, which is a place for the self-realization of an individual in a safe area of the community. It identifies itself on the basis of common shared values, defines its position in the context of the society and ecosystem, as well as its mission, development intentions and goals.

Scaling

Scaling solutions

Scaling means expansion of the solutions of societal problems on a larger number of beneficiaries while maintaining the original intention and quality.

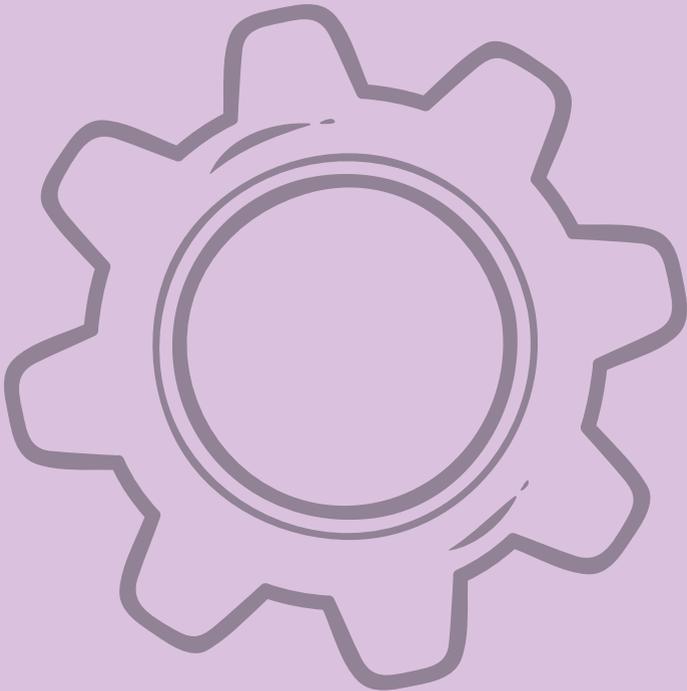


Advocacy

Advocacy means the activity of an individual or a group that seeks to influence decisions within political, economic and social systems and institutions. Advocacy may include a variety of activities that a person or an organisation perform, including media campaigns, publications, public appearances, or conducting and publishing research. Lobbying is one of the forms of advocacy, which consists in direct access to legislators and in an effort to influence their decision-making on an issue that is of great importance to the group.

5

Financing





Financing social innovations

Multisource financing

Financing of social innovations comes from grants and donations from foundations and corporate donors, collective support, loans, and own economic activity. Thus it is mainly philanthropic capital. Subsequently, these are public resources in the form of tax allocation and EU grants. Other forms of financing are currently used to a minimal extent in Slovakia.

- **Stakeholders** – as defined in Part 1 – Definitions / Change Makers

- **Crowdfunding/Investing**

It is about a community support or collective financing. In the last decade, it has become perhaps the most popular alternative to funding new innovative ideas. The authors raise money to implement their ideas from the so-called contributors through the online environment. The consideration of the contribution can be a simple thank you note, a T-shirt, a concert ticket or a specific product that will be launched on the market thanks to the campaign. It depends on the specific model of collective support.

- **Impact investing**

It provides capital for the solution of social, societal and environmental problems. It is investing into companies, organisations and funds with the intention to create a measurable positive social or environmental impact, and simultaneously ensure a return on investment. Investments and their return are perceived through their social impact and through recognition of specific social change they support.

Venture philanthropy

- It combines concept and methods of business activities with philanthropy objectives. Its main goal is to help build a strong social organisation with financial resources and non-proprietary support. Venture philanthropy rests on three pillars: tailor-made financing, support with higher added value, and measuring and managing its social impact.

Prerequisite for the implementation of solutions in the field of social innovations

An important prerequisite for the implementation of smart solutions also in the field of social innovations and related projects is to ensure their financial feasibility and the choice of an optimal financial structure. Innovation (including social innovation) may be funded from three sources and a combination of these:

- **National public investments** – state budget, HTU budget, and budgets of towns and municipalities (either by means of tax reliefs or credits, and support programmes), private investments (corporate investment, project financing including PPP);
- **International financing of infrastructure** (from European Structural and Investment Funds – ESIF, Multilateral Development Banks – MDB, Export Credit Agencies – ECA, as well as bilateral loans and support from the EU institutions).

Such forms of financing are indispensable tools in financing of large infrastructure projects due to their ability of mitigating risk of their significant credit capacity, as well as experience and expertise in the field of infrastructure development in the SR.

Other financing instruments may take the form of loans (including with interest rate rebates), guarantees, equity or quasi-equity investments, equity / debt investments or shares mediated by the European Union through risk-sharing instruments, possibly in combination with grants and project bonds.

Recommended forms of financing of the new social innovation projects

Innovation vouchers

Innovation vouchers are non-repayable financial contributions from the state budget, intended to support the development of innovative activities of enterprises. The aim is to support businesses that have the potential to increase their competitiveness through innovations in their



own products, services and processes. The aid is provided in the form of a voucher for the payment of services to the project leader – an eligible organisation registered in the „List of eligible organisations for the solution of innovative projects“.

Social impact bonds

Social impact bonds are a type of bonds, yet not very common. Although they operate for a fixed period of time, they do not offer a fixed rate of return. Repayment to investors is conditional on the achievement of specific social results. Therefore, in terms of investment risk, bonds with a social impact are similar to bonds with a structured product or equity investments.

Innovation fund

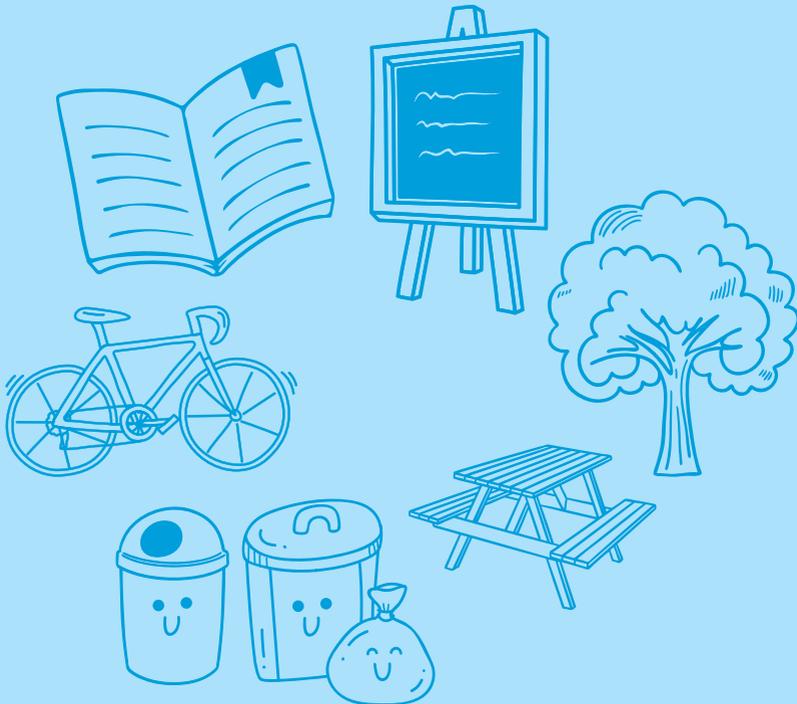
The Innovation fund is a non-investment fund that provides support to project holders in the form of repayable financial aid at favourable interest rates. It supports the solutions of applied research, development and innovation projects, the use and protection of patents, industrial and utility models, which should result in innovative products, technologies and services with higher added value with a real chance of application in the national and European, or even world market. The fund pays special attention to the support of development and conceptual studies, which determine the main areas of use of the results of scientific, research and development solutions. In order to ensure a return on the funds provided, the Innovation fund also requires the establishment of a lien on the applicant's financial assistance when concluding contracts.

EU funds

The European structural and investment funds (ESIF) are undoubtedly one of the main financial resources in Slovakia. Their main objective is to invest into job creation and sustainable and sound European economy and the environment.

6

Examples of successful social innovation projects in Slovakia





Project areas

- **work and support for entrepreneurship** – unemployment, professional qualification, work;
- **poverty** – homelessness, poverty, indebtedness;
- **education and human development** – higher education institutions, informal, pre-school, leisure, adult education, awareness raising;
- **quality of life and financial literacy**
- **diversity** – ethnicity, inter-cultural relations, migration, disabilities, gender-related work;
- **law** – advocacy, crime rate, assistance to ex-convicts (former prisoners), law, legal protection;
- **social care and population health** – support for victims, working with generations, prevention of violence, psychosocial disadvantage, family, youth care, addictions, health;
- **social mobility and inclusion;**
- **development of technologies;**
- **local development** – community development, municipal and regional development;
- **effective public administration;**
- **environment** – climate change, development of the environment;
- **art, culture and creativity** – culture, art; and
- **other** – other.

Včelí kRaj / Bee Paradise



Project: Bee Paradise helps people in the Malohont region. To support beekeepers in the region, the project came with the idea of Fair Honey. Fairness is reflected in the conditions of buying-in and sale prices - beekeepers are not forced into selling for low prices; their honey is not added to honey mixtures. On the contrary, each honey jar is labelled with the information about its producers and their life story.



Project objective: Educating children and adults about the importance of bees. The social dimension of the project is in the creation of jobs in beekeeping and processing of bee products. Long-term unemployed people from the region, especially women and people with mental and physical disabilities should also benefit from the project and its activities.



Project area: education and human development, local development, work and support for entrepreneurship.



Web: <https://kraj.sk/>

Raslavice



Project: The project builds on existing field social work and employment of Roma in the local economy. The project operates in agriculture and construction, while the profit-making construction services earn for the non-profit agriculture. The construction sector brings profit to the municipality, which is then reinvested into activities beneficial for the community.



Project objective: Enhancing employment based on the principles of social business. In the last two years, 65 new jobs have been created in Raslavice, and more are in the pipeline.



Project area: local development, poverty, jobs, and promoting entrepreneurship.



Web: <https://www.raslavice.sk/>



Veľký Slavkov



Project: Within the project “A shelter on the outside, a large family inside”, some 260 young men went through a halfway house in Veľký Slavkov. Young men with no family background may stay in the halfway house for four and more years. After becoming independent, many arrange their new lives in the neighbourhood.



Project objective: Understanding the needs of the clients in the shelter, young men in transition into adulthood, and making real contribution through mutual efforts to their integration into everyday independent life.



Project area: social care and health of the population, diversity.



Web: <http://www.domnapolceste.sk/>

Stanica Žilina-Záriečie / Žilina-Záriečie Railway Station



Project: Social aspects and social goals are not primary values in the project of a railway station in Žilina-Záriečie, however, they exist as part of values of the working community. The biggest motivation for the people working at the Station is the opportunity for their personal growth. The organisation does not have a fixed structure or job positions, yet active persons can create and maintain their jobs within its form. It is quite common that they move from one position to another.



Project objective: Offering full-time work for persons who otherwise have difficulties to find jobs on the labour market. Young talented people, who have difficulties to maintain jobs and would not prosper in a regular working environment, can find jobs in the cultural hub.



Project area: work and support for entrepreneurship, social care and population health, diversity.



Web: <https://www.stanica.sk/>

Divadlo bez domova / Homeless Theatre



Project: Homeless theatre brings together various socially excluded groups of people, involves them in joint theatre work, helps them to socialize, motivates and educates them, and improves their overall social situation. Fast social (and climate) change brings about new socially excluded groups, for instance refugees or ex-convicts.



Project objective: Safe social contacts, disabled people will get personal assistants, improve their financial situation, learn informally, and also improve their self-esteem, motivation and socialization, and improve their cultural life.



Project area: diversity, art, culture and creativity, local development, poverty, social mobility and inclusion.



Web: <http://bbpt.divadlobezdomova.sk/divadlobezdomova/WELCOME.html>

AJ Ty v IT / You too in IT



Project: AJ Ty v IT (You too in IT) creates for women and girls equal access to IT education and subsequent job opportunities in the sector. Low interest amongst girls in technology subjects generates their underrepresentation in IT jobs. As a consequence, persistent pay gap between men and women is caused by women working in less paid positions. It generates related problems in the development and growth of companies lacking qualified human resources.



Project objective: Support girls in choosing careers in IT and increase representation of girls studying at IT schools by at least 30% and women working in IT jobs by 40%.



Project area: work and support for entrepreneurship, education and human development.



Web: <https://www.ajtyvit.sk/o-nas/>



Projekt omama / Omama Project



Project: Omama is a project of early care for children. It promotes and enhances healthy cognitive, social and psychomotor development of Roma children who live in generational poverty during the most critical period of life (0-3 years). Trained Roma women from marginalised Roma communities – omamas – carry out home visits and help children acquire new skills. These women are empowered to become part of the solution of generational poverty.



Project objective: Improving all aspects of a child's early development – fine and gross motor skills, cognitive skills, socio-emotional skills, language skills and communication, creativity, resilience, and healthier lifestyle. The programme aims to strengthen self-confidence in children and their parents, improve their relations and child's self-respect and respect for others. This all can improve the child's preparedness for pre-school and primary school education.



Project area: work and support for entrepreneurship, poverty, social care and population health, social mobility and inclusion.



Web: <https://cestavon.sk/projekt-omama/index>

Komunitná kuchyňa na Trh–Piac–Markt / Community Cuisine at Trh-Piac-Markt



Project: Community cuisine at Trh–Piac–Markt is a long-term project of the Alliance between Stará tržnica (Old Market Hall in Bratislava) and Azim Farhardi – Afghan native living in Bratislava.



Project objective: Azim has long been working in the area of integration of foreigners. Within this project, he invites other representatives of foreign communities to cook and present their traditional national meals for the visitors in the food market.



Project area: diversity.



Web: <https://staratrznica.sk/sk/trh-piac-markt>

Knižný Klub PaĽikerav / PaĽikerav Book Club



Project: The PALIKERAV Book Club is about our young Roma students, the books they read and the feelings that have when reading, all of which they are happy to share with you. We try to point out that the Roma not only dance and sing, but also excel at other activities. For some of them it takes a few hours to get to our book club meetings. However, they want to show that they are – as they say – “not only good dancers”, but also “have other, more intellectual hobbies, such as book-reading”.



Project objective: Allowing young people to shake off social stereotypes through a book club – simply innovative.



Project area: education and human development, art, culture and creativity, local development, diversity.



Web: <http://www.kniznyklubpalikerav.sk/o-nas>

EduCAN



Project: A specialised centre focused on violence prevention, education in the area of professional work with children who have suffered maltreatment and sexual abuse, child victims in the context of multidisciplinary cooperation and elimination of secondary victimisation. They have developed two programmes: educational module “Bruises on the Soul I”, and a creative and interactive prevention programme “Kozmo and his Adventures”.



Project objective: Effectively and comprehensively addressing the issue of abused and maltreated children, victims of domestic violence in order to ensure and protect fundamental human rights and freedoms; delivering services of general interest to children and families with children in crisis.



Project area: education and human development, social care and population health, social mobility and inclusion.



Web: <https://centrumslniecko.sk/?s=EDUCAN>



Biele bicycle / White Bicycles



Project: White Bicycles is a bikesharing project. It was officially launched in December 2014 in Bratislava.



Project objective: The project has been launched under the open source licence, freely available on the Internet, which means that anyone can create their own bikesharing systems in their towns. Many examples can be seen all around the world, and in many towns and cities from Kežmarok in Slovakia to Texas, USA.



Project area: education and human development, local development, social care and health.



Web: <https://cyklokoalicia.sk/biele-bicykle/>

Kufřík pre Kukulíka / The Suitcase for Kukulík



Project: The project highlights the needs of abandoned children and mobilises hospital staff and people in the community. It invites the competent authorities, the public and donors to get to know the abandoned child, so that they can personalise the individual story of each child. It uses the experience of those who have experienced something similar in the past. This project introduces new sensitive child-friendly, parent/carer-friendly and roots-friendly tool for genuine help in child protection systems.



Project objective: Connecting not only the foster parent or carer with the adopted child, but also professionals, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs and lay persons involved in helping the child with the family that takes responsibility for the child (future adoptive parents).



Project area: education and human development, social care and population health



Web: <https://www.navrat.sk/o-nas/centra-navrat/65-centrum-navrat-v-banskej-bystrici/359-kufrik-pre-kukulika>

BUDDY dobrovoľník na celý život pre každé dieťa / BUDDY Volunteer for Life for Every Child



Project: The BUDDY programme links children from children's homes with fully integrated adult volunteers for many years, so that the children have a better chance of a life in dignity and the volunteers have a better chance of a good company. BUDDY is almost always the only fully integrated adult interested in those children and not paid for it. Such a relationship helps traumatised children and changes the lives of volunteers and people around them.



Project objective: Supporting children who cannot grow up in their families and complementing the existing state system, which, as the child grows, spends more money on their care and integration into society.



Project area: poverty, social care and population health, social mobility and inclusion.



Web: <https://tvojbuddy.sk/o-nas>

Koniec násilia, čas na práva / End of Violence, Time for Rights



Project: The project deals with one of the most serious violations of rights faced by street sex workers. Violence against them is a long-term problem that needs to be tackled with a comprehensive approach towards three targeted groups – the police, sex workers and the public.



Project objective: Highlighting the violence against women working in the sex trade, but also increasing the legal awareness of these women, who should be protected by law as anyone else.



Project area: social care and population health.



Web: <http://diskriminacia.sk/>



Program Chráň sa sám / Protect Yourself Programme



Project: The project is one of the three remaining programmes in Slovakia, thanks to which injecting drug users or people working in the street have access to services (i.e. services aimed at reducing risks and harm).



Project objective: The Protect Yourself programme of changing syringes and field social work is the oldest one in Slovakia, providing assistance directly in the streets of Bratislava. Every year we reach out to more than 1,000 people in the field, to whom we usually distribute more than 140,000 sterile syringes in order to protect their health.



Project area: poverty, local development, social care and population health, social mobility and inclusion.



Web: <https://www.ozodyseus.sk/chran-sa-sam>

Agentky rovnosti / Agents of Equality



Project: The project deals with gender equality, human rights and the rights of ethnic minorities. It empowers simple Roma women living in Roma settlements, identifies leaders among them, teaches them, helps them organise and take responsibility for their lives and the lives of their loved ones. It promotes social inclusion and uses methods and tools of social assistance, community development and people development.



Project objective: Helping Roma women living in settlements improve their position in marginalised Roma communities and at the same time improve the position of their community in society.



Project area: education and human development, diversity, social mobility and inclusion.



Web: <http://www.spolu-slovensko.sk/>

Divé maky / Wild Poppies



Project: As a unique project, the Wild Poppies Scholarship Programme paves the way to better education for talented Roma children, motivates them to perform better, teaches them resilience and determination, so that they can grow into successful young people who will be able to help the community they come from.



Project objective: Helping talented Roma children get an education and thus a chance of a better future that would be meaningful for them as well as the society as a whole.



Project area: education and human development, social mobility and inclusion.



Web: <https://www.ludialudom.sk/profil/detail/1283>

Participatívny rozpočet / Participatory Budget



Project: Inspired by the Porto Alegre model, the so-called participatory budgets as a democratic form of budgeting are to be introduced in Slovak towns and municipalities. Every year, their citizens over the age of 15 have an opportunity to propose and decide how to spend the amount allocated for this purpose in the municipal budget. The project aims not only to involve the public in the planning of the budget, but also to elicit their interest and understanding of the way the towns work and to make the selected investments and projects count.



Project objective: Enabling the citizens of a municipality to use public funds in an open, joint and democratic manner via the mechanism known as participatory budget in order to design and implement their own ideas for improving their town, self-government and their community.



Project area: local development.



Web: <https://www.utopia.sk/liferay/web/guest/projekty>



Nota bene – Nosiči batožín / Nota bene – Luggage porters



Project: The luggage porters are selected vendors of Nota bene street magazine, who between 2014 and 2019 helped passengers at the main station in Bratislava with suitcases. The porters were employed by the NGO Proti príúdu, which has published Nota bene since 2001 and runs other pilot projects to help homeless people.



Project objective: Enabling Nota bene vendors to get rid of debts and prepare in a sheltered environment for work in the regular labour market.



Project area: poverty, social mobility and inclusion.



Web: <https://www.notabene.sk/?nosici-batozin>

Aj my chceme žiť doma / We, too, want to live at home



Project: The project offers an opportunity for deaf children in the Nitra region to receive a full education in their natural social environment. It is a series of supported educational services for deaf children, which is unique in Slovakia. The project implements activities aimed at developing communication skills, supporting the child in and after school, and supporting parents and teachers.



Project objective: Ensuring that every child and his/her family receive such support in their natural family and social environment as necessary for the child to develop fully during the early childhood stage and then be able to handle education in mainstream school (kindergarten and primary) despite communication and information barriers.



Project area: diversity.



Web: <http://www.fffeta.sk/svk/projekty.htm>

Stretnutia rodinného kruhu / Family Circle Meetings



Project: The philosophy of the Family Circle Meetings is based on the assumption that in most cases it is the family who knows how to best help the child. In practice this means shifting responsibility to the family, giving them a chance to address the issue jointly in a constructive manner. It presents a new approach to problem-solving.



Project objective: A unique and at the same time natural way of involving the family, relatives and other close and important persons of the at-risk child into the planning and handling of the difficult situations in the lives of the child and his/her family.



Project area: social care and population health.



Web: <https://www.usmev.sk/o-nas/>

Iniciatíva hivaid.ssk / Hivaid.ssk Initiative



Project: The project consists of four main segments. The first segment is a website for the general public with a special section for people living with HIV, containing the most up-to-date information. The second segment is online counselling for the general population, special positive online counselling (from PLWH to PLWH), counselling for PLWH (Skype, phone, e-mail, in person). The third segment includes meetings of people living with HIV, and the fourth is the search for and the links to healthcare professionals who are willing to help people living with HIV.



Project objective: Providing basic information on HIV transmission, protection and testing, disseminating articles on treatment and life with HIV, previously only available in a foreign language, and helping people living with HIV.



Project area: diversity.



Web: <http://hivaid.ssk/o-nas/o-nasej-webstranke/>



Implemented EU projects



Project: To date, the municipality of Spišský Hrhov has managed to expand community work involving its own citizens, to establish a community centre in the village or to organise an exchange of partners of local employment. They apply a model of activating human resources through a system of activities; have implemented projects of reconstruction and thermal insulation of primary school facilities, including the gym; support tourism services in the Spišská Občina – Spišský Hrhov Microregion and its surroundings; and work on revamping Spišský Hrhov's centre, including social services in Spišský Hrhov and Roškovice.



Project area: work and support for entrepreneurship, education and human development, art, culture and creativity.



Web: <https://www.spiskyhrhov.sk/obec-2/realizovane-projekty-eu/>

SUPERTRIEDA / SUPERCLASS



Project: The project is a national festival for school classes inspired by the world-famous SuperStar competition. Throughout the year, school classes work together to create a play (around the topic of a world in which everyone is happy) they present at a joint national festival at the end of the school year. Every child in the class must get involved in the project, which teaches the children to work together. They learn about empathy and about belonging to a group, which helps them acquire enough emotional capital to develop their talents.



Project objective: As a tool for the prevention of bullying among children, the project aims to create a friendly environment in places where the children spend most of their childhood, and to integrate all children without discrimination in joint creative work. Children create something together, laugh, inspire and stimulate each other.



Project area: education and human development, diversity, social mobility and inclusion.



Web: <https://supertrieda.com/>

7

**Examples
of successful
social
innovation
projects
in selected
countries**





Examples of good practice abroad are a source of inspiration, which, however, must be adapted to the conditions of the country as well as individual regions.

Fundacja Laka – Poland



Project: Fundacja Laka promotes a simple but effective solution for biodiversity loss: transforming the artificial mono-culture lawns in urbanised areas into eco-friendly flower meadows. The model of building biodiversity is based on educating and raising awareness of the importance of meadows in urban areas, supporting local communities in transforming parks into meadows and advocacy work in order to change urban legislation that only supports the creation of mono-culture parks and imposes fines for green spaces that do not look neat enough. Fundacja Laka also creates local seed banks for the production of wildflower seeds, even providing therapy for excluded groups (drug addicts, alcoholics, the homeless). More than 85 flower meadows have already been created in Poland and legislation has changed in eight regions.



Project objective: Supporting biodiversity in cities and preventing the destruction of natural resources.



Ashoka Fellow: Maciej Podyma
(<https://www.ashoka.org/en/fellow/maciej-podyma>)



Project area: environment.



Web: <https://laka.org.pl/>

NoRO Centre – Romania



Project: NoRo is the first centre in Europe to offer a holistic approach to care for patients with rare diseases (i.e. diseases affecting less than five people out of 10,000) for which there is either no

treatment or it is not affordable. NoRO offers affordable health, social and educational services for patients with these diseases who get access to the diagnostics of their disease and therapies, including individual and group therapy. The centre also offers social integration activities that help them develop the skills needed for life and employment. This way, the care for people with rare diseases becomes available also to people on lower income and is covered by health insurance.



Project objective: Providing affordable and holistic care for patients with rare diseases, thus improving their quality of life, and changing the rigid healthcare system through cross-sectoral cooperation of experts.



Ashoka Fellow: Dorica Dan
(<https://www.ashoka.org/en/fellow/dorica-dan>)



Project area: social care and population health, diversity.



Web: <https://www.centrulnoro.ro/index.php>

zIndex – Czech Republic



Project: zIndex is a unique public procurement benchmarking tool for contracting authorities. It uses real data to measure each contracting authority's rate of transparency, efficiency and corruption potential in public procurement. The zIndex measures the contracting authority's compliance with best practice recommendations defined by the OECD, EU and Transparency International. These indicators are then combined into a single index that shows the deviation from best practice. By regularly monitoring the results of public procurement, the zIndex provides the public with a tool for monitoring the way an office, city, hospital or state company work. At the same time, it helps contracting authorities, experts and journalists with real facts when discussing appropriate procurement practice and highlights not only controversial cases but also successful contracting authorities to motivate others to better manage public funds.



-  *Project objective:* Improving the management of public finances.
-  *Project area:* efficient public administration.
-  *Ashoka Fellow:* Jirka Skuhrovec
(<https://ashoka-cee.org/czech/fellow/jiri-skuhrovec/>)
-  *Web:* <https://www.zindex.cz/>

Buurtzorg – Netherlands



Project: Buurtzorg (Dutch for “neighbourhood care”) is a network of more than 8,000 nurses organised in about 500 smaller autonomous teams providing community home care, mostly for retired persons. Within each neighbourhood, independent teams of nurses are responsible for providing comprehensive care to their patients. Nurses take more responsibility for their work than if they were part of an institutional system, and try to provide the best possible care. They share their experiences with each other and their communication is facilitated by a dedicated digital platform, also connecting them with doctors and pharmacists outside the network. Combining the autonomy provided by the carer with the use of a dedicated intranet allows Buurtzorg to be a leaner and more responsive home care model.

-  *Project objective:* Providing community home care to retirees, enabling them to live in dignity in their home environment and not in institutional care.
-  *Project area:* social care and population health.
-  *Ashoka Fellow:* Jos De Blok
(<https://www.ashoka.org/en-us/fellow/jos-de-blok>)
-  *Web:* <https://www.buurtzorg.com/>

Discovering Hands – Germany



Project: Discovering Hands project has created a standardised system for breast examiners based on Braille strips. It consists of five adhesive strips placed around a woman's breast with Braille and coloured coordinates, allowing to identify each breast / lump abnormality using two-dimensional coordinates. This allows blind women to perform examinations and provide thorough care to women under 50, who are not entitled to mammography examinations covered by health insurance and for whom breast examinations are only cursory. This has created a whole new profession in which blind women can perform the day-to-day duties of a sighted doctor, including keeping medical records, and provide a more thorough examination for the early detection of breast cancer in a wide range of women.



Project objective: Ensuring the early detection of breast cancer and providing meaningful employment for people with visual impairment.



Project area: social care and population health.



Ashoka Fellow: Frank Hoffmann
(<https://www.ashoka.org/en/fellow/frank-hoffmann>)



Web: <https://www.discovering-hands.de/>

Les P'tits Doudous – France



Project: French Ashoka Fellow Nolwenn FEBVRE has introduced a major environmental initiative in French hospitals, designed to recycle unused biomedical waste and raise funds for healthcare innovation. For the first time in the healthcare system, change comes from the bottom, by organising healthcare staff. Nolwenn has created the Les P'tits Doudous brand, under which medical staff can work together and recycle material. The funds have been used, for example, to create games for children awaiting surgery, in order to reduce their anxiety, insomnia after surgery or the length of recovery.



Project objective: Raising funds for innovation in healthcare and creating conditions for better hospital care for children.



Ashoka Fellow: Nolwenn Febvre
(<https://www.ashoka.org/en-us/fellow/nolwenn-febvre>)



Project area: healthcare.



Web: <https://www.lesptitsdoudous.org/>

How to achieve the implementation of sustainable social innovation projects in the regions of Slovakia?

Six main questions on the implementation of social change through social innovations in the regions of Slovakia

What is the primary goal?

Narrowing the social and economic gaps between regions.

Is the project sustainable?

Set a time period of at least 5 years.

Who is your target group?

For this reason, we involved the target group in the search for solutions.

Are you able to share your solutions?

Only then can you start a social change.

Want to get involved in bringing together change makers?

MIRDI will create an active platform for change makers.

Can we work together to develop a concept that will drive change in the regions?

In the form of regional competence centres.



A series of 20 horizontal orange lines spanning the width of the page, providing a template for handwriting practice.

List of the Platform members:

MIRDI:

- **prof. Ing. Dušan Velič, DrSc.** – deputy minister I (MIRDI SR)
- **Ing. Katarína Matušková** – acting head of Department for Financial Instruments (MIRDI SR)

Founders of the Social Innovation Platform:

- **PhDr. Vladimír Ledecký** – Slovak politician, member of the National Council of the Slovak Republic and former deputy minister
- **PaeDr. Michal Smetánka** – former adviser to the deputy minister

Business sector:

- **Konopné družstvo** – representative of the business sector Ing. Dušan Knezovič

NGOs:

- **Pontis Foundation** – executive director Martina Kolesárová
- **3lobit, o.z.** – executive director Peter Mészáros
- **Ashoka (SR, Czech Rep., etc.)** – Radoslav Pittner
- **SOCIAL INNOVATORS** – executive director Mikuláš Kresánek
<https://en.socialniinovatori.sk/>

Academia:

- **Faculty of Social Sciences and Health Care** – dean doc. PhDr. Rastislav Rosinský, PhD.

Other stakeholders in the Platform online:

- <https://kvalitneskolstvo.sk/kto-sme/> – JUDr. Daniela Čorbová
- <https://www.statpedu.sk/sk/> – National Institute for Education (ŠPÚ) – Miroslava Hapalová – did not take part due to other work commitments
- <https://www.iseia.eu/zoznam-centier> – International Slovak Educational Institution and Association (ISEIA) – Ing. Jarmila Buchová, PhD.



Members' contact details:

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Links to websites and contacts details of the Social Innovation Platform members:

Business sector:

- **Ing. Dušan Knezovič** – representative of the business sector (Konopné družstvo), link: <https://www.konopnydvor.sk/contact-us>

NGOs:

- **Ing. Martina Kolesárová** – executive director of Pontis Foundation, link: <https://www.nadaciapontis.sk/>
- **Peter Mészáros** – managing director, statutory representative of 3lobit civic association, link: <https://3lobit.sk/>
- **Radoslav Pittner** – manager CZ&SK, Ashoka (SR, Czech Rep., etc.), link: <https://ashoka-cee.org/slovakia/o-nas/>
- **Mikuláš Kresánek** – co-founder and director of the cooperative SOCIAL INNOVATORS, link: <https://en.socialniinovatori.sk/>

Academia:

- **doc. PhDr. Rastislav Rosinský, PhD.** – dean – Faculty of Social Sciences and Health Care, link: <https://www.fsvaz.ukf.sk/index.php/sk/o-fakulte/profil-fakulty>

Other stakeholders in the Platform online:

- **JUDr. Daniela Čorbová** – works mainly in the area of school law and legal advice for innovative schools and initiatives for the establishment of innovative schools in Slovakia, link: <https://kvalitneskolstvo.sk/kto-sme/>
- **Mgr. Miroslava Hapalová**, director of National Institute for Education: <https://www.statpedu.sk/sk/aktuality/>
- **Ing. Jarmila Buchová, PhD.** – iseia.eu – link: <https://www.iseia.eu/home/nase-projekty>

The Handbook defines main areas of social innovation, key notions and terms, including examples of good practice in the area of social innovation in Slovakia and abroad.

The topic of social or societal innovation, as the case may be, should enrich regional development with the most efficient and innovative solutions of social issues in the regions. This topic shows possibilities of innovative projects, which can be part of the strategies and their implementation in individual regions. At the same time, it shows more efficient options for financing the projects, which can change the quality of life of the society.

