



Social Entrepreneurship Support Network
of the Baltic Sea Region

RECOMMENDATION FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ON MUNICIPALITY LEVEL IN TERMS OF EFFECTIVE TOOLS STIMULATING DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL ECONOMY START-UPS



www.socialenterprisebsr.net



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

The Social Entrepreneurship Development in the Baltic Sea region is executed under the Erasmus+ programme and co-financed by the European Union.

Recommendation for public administration on municipality level in terms of effective tools stimulating development of social economy start-ups

The Social Entrepreneurship Development in the Baltic Sea region is executed under the Erasmus+ programme and co-financed by the European Union.

Authors:

Poland: Anna Pomykol, Kinga Zglinicka - Centrum Rozwoju Inicjatyw Społecznych CRIS; Piotr Maślowski, deputy of President of city Rybnik in Poland

Co-authors:

Finland: Ulla Tirronen, Kasvuhuone osuuskunta

Estonia: Jaan Aps, Estonian Social Enterprise Network

Denmark: Per Bach, Sociale Entreprenører i Danmark

Latvia: Renate Lukjanska, Sociālās inovācijas centrs

Lithuania: Mindaugas Danys, Socialinių investicijų fondas

Sweden: Bert-Ola Bergstrand, Social Kapital Forum

The information and views set out in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Commission. The Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this study. Neither the Commission or any person acting on the Commission's behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

RECOMMENDATION FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ON MUNICIPALITY LEVEL IN TERMS OF EFFECTIVE TOOLS STIMULATING DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL ECONOMY START-UPS

Stimulating the creation of new social enterprises, creating conditions for their formation (permanent mechanisms of incubation) require complex interventions in many areas. For most of those areas the local administration can have a strong influence. Although it is a very ambitious and demanding task for local authorities we would like to encourage them to take this effort as it is really doable and worthwhile. Whether social entrepreneurship will become more important and strong, impetus to the development of the social economy sector depends largely on local authorities' attitude and actions. In the first place we want to dispel the myths about the topic that were negatively verified through the project.



MYTH 1.

The development of the social economy in each country has a unique character.

Fact: Problems concerning the individual countries of the Baltic Sea are very similar, for example the still insufficient use of the mechanism of social clauses in public procurement, and lack of social leaderships with well develop business competences. The development of social economy faces surprisingly similar barriers, while the progress of sector development is different from

country to country. Each country has a deficits and good practices so all can learn some solutions from other.

MYTH 2.

The social enterprise legislation plays the most important role in the development of the social economy.

Fact: The law is not a key element in the development of the sector, nor is it a most important barrier. The existence of appropriate legislation favors of course, the functioning of social enterprises. The information gained from the project shows that the most developed legal solutions exists in Denmark, Finland and Poland. This does not mean, however, that legal system was the starting point for social economy development and that social enterprises in those countries don't face less relevant problems and obstacles than in Estonia, Lithuania or Latvia. Sometimes existence of too many legislation can bring chaos, misunderstanding among social entrepreneurs, inconsistent interpretations of the law among public officers and in the end become a barrier instead of facilitation.

The basis for social economy development in the light of presents situation seems to be a conscious political leaders and individual members of society that understands the idea of sustainable development and in the situation of the consumer, both public ones as well the individual ones is guided not only by the price but also sees long-term profits, not only economic ones.



What then should be implemented, what we can recommend to decision-makers or public officers in the countries around the Baltic Sea?

First of all, we would like to highlight the fact that the term social enterprise is not well known or understood and knowledge about the idea of the social economy sector is fragmentary, not only among public opinion but also among public officers and political leaders (from a national level to very local).

In United Kingdom, for example, the social entrepreneurship sector exists and develops mostly due to open minded leaders and a well prepared legal system; in Scandinavia in turn we can observe more conscious and socially responsible society open for the social economy idea. In post-communist countries, even though there is long tradition of the ideology of the cooperative or joint work, very often it's perceived negatively as it associated with the previous political system. So it's obvious that still **work in terms of spreading the spirit of social economy have to be done.**

At the European Union level the need of supporting development of social entrepreneurship was presented in detailed way in 2011 in a document Social Business Initiatives, but it took time to bring it from European Commission to level to each country. For the last few years, many national directives appeared in Scandinavian countries as well in Poland or Lithuania, where the systems of support are continuously expanding. Among others we can call the example of national programmes/strategies dedicated to social



economic development, including financial support mechanisms, and the whole infrastructure of substantive support. In many cases these processes are stimulated by the European Funds and these trends are also visible in Estonia or Latvia where the creation of programs and strategies is in process.

It clearly shows that on the level of experts who prepare strategic plans awareness of necessity to support development of social enterprises exists and have a well planned structure. But the biggest challenge always is to transfer the national programs into action on a local level; it cannot happen without knowledge and belief in the sense of social economy.

Therefore, we recommend that local authorities regardless the size of the local governance unit, in the entire region of Baltic Sea should begin with social campaigns and education. Of course taken activities should be adequate to unite resources and adapt to local conditions and potential but still even among small community raising social economy awareness activates are the key to sustainable development. The undertaken activities should be both internal and external matter, alike:

Awareness-raising activities profiled to the specific audiences divided into: the local administration (internal actions), the private sector (external activities) and individual consumers (external activities).

Each of these groups has completely different expectations, and each of these groups may gain something else for the development of social entrepreneurship so the key to success is to define their need, meet their expectations. In case of the consumers it can be a unique product, e.g. in an eco-friendly style. In the case of local municipality the main gain will be connected with minimization of social problems and execution of public tasks by representatives of society (fulfilling the principle of subsidiarity). For business it will be gaining a service users or good suppliers, cooperators.

An example of untapped potential can be situation of very popular in Poland market of design, crafts and local products. Unfortunately, few of local producers heard about the idea of social economy, not to mention the lack of knowledge about pretty rich opportunities for cooperation and financial support for such activity. If there would be any stimulation or impulses from local administration in terms of spreading information about social economy the individuals could create a strong cooperative able to produce more, hire more local employees and enter wider market.

Possible activities in terms of awareness-raising:

Internal:

- Providing educational materials, information about new trends and policies dedicated to social economy topic for the decision-makers (both mayors, deputies of the municipalities as well members of councils).
- Provide statistics of efficiency/effectiveness of social enterprises at the local level (impact on labour market, providing social services, impact on social inclusion. Municipality department responsible for social policy can analyse data collect by labour offices and social welfare institutions as well collect information from local social enterprises) to show the benefits, profits of social economy mechanism. If no local statistics is available, use neighbourhood or economically close countries for comparison.
- Organize regular consultation meetings among high rank public officers (directors of departments) dedicated to social economy topics, including providing information about local social enterprises, the results of their work and presenting statistics mentioned above.
- Delegate public officers to participate in seminars, forums, conferences dedicated to social economy topics.

External:

- Organizing seminars and conferences promoting idea of social economy, showing the potential of social enterprise as the answer for social inclusion, and a way of bringing disadvantage groups to the labour market or as the providers of social services organized and delivered on a local level with engagement of local resources.
- Promote the idea of socially responsible purchase among citizens, encouraging them to buy services from local social enterprises underling the wider benefits for local community development.
- Promote local social enterprise services, products among citizens during events organized by local authorities, e.g. Christmas or Easter markets, leisure time events for citizens, e.g. concerts, picnics etc. What is crucial to mention that this activities have to be organized with maintain the principle of competitiveness and transparency in public administration support.
- Promoting the idea of social economy and specific social enterprises among local business, including promotion of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility).

Education – at this point, we will focus on the training of public officers and decision - makers in such areas as the use of social clauses, working with small business and the impact of local government activity on the local market.

In the book "If Mayors Ruled the World – Dysfunctional Nations, Rising Cities" Professor Benjamin Barber (Yale University Press, 2013) cites data which show that in the so-called megacities number of jobs dependent on local administrations varies from 14% in New York to over 20% in the cities of Europe and Asia. Thus, the effect of self-government on the local labor market, but also the local economy far exceeds the common imagination.

In my opinion (Piotr Masłowski, deputy of President of city Rybnik in Poland, co-author of recommendations) *"Among political leaders, there is a lack of social economy ambassadors. From my own observations I know it's not a matter of lack of will, but lack of elementary knowledge. I experience such situations when looking for a solution identical to the social economy, while decision makers are not aware of existing opportunities - especially in terms of ordering services from local producers and involvement in this way different groups requiring support. Social entrepreneurship, especially social clauses / socially responsible procurement, or even of CSR issues are new. Political classes often are older (often lack knowledge about new trends), and by nature are more conservative and cautious"*.



Note, however, that the need for training courses and gaining knowledge in the indicated ranges need to be awakened, through promotional campaigns. A public officer, decision - maker involved in the activities under protest will become an anti-ambassador the idea of social entrepreneurship, rather than a promoter.

Another issue related to education is lobbying at all levels of education to introduce the topic of social entrepreneurship. A crucial thing is to add social economy as a part of economic studies, but also we should not forget about to the economic

vocational education (for which the local authority can have an impact) or less system solution like organizing competitions in school about social economy, promoting among children and young people the ideology of cooperatives so that future potential employee could grown with understating of social economy spirit.

Possible activities in terms of education:

Internal:

- Delegate public officers for training courses about social clauses, working with social enterprises.
- Organize an internal educational meeting, peer to peer learning among public officers in the topic of social economy start-up support.
- Organize working groups, working-educational meeting with other municipalities employees to share experiences, knowledge in term of dealing with social economy development.
- Provide updated information for decision–makers (mayors, deputies and member of the councils) about trends, legislations, solutions in terms of social economy sector.

External:

- Organizing educational talks at schools.
- Lobbying for or implementing (if a municipality has those competences) in the studies program elements dedicated to social economy, especially at secondary schools and universities, at faculties dedicated to both social inclusion as well economics. In other words it means building partnerships and tightening cooperation with other stakeholders responsible for education, both formal and non-formal: schools, universities, ministries, other public institutions, private education institutions, for example NGOs.

The responsibility for implementation of these activities depends on each local authority unit and specifics of each country legislation system. However we recommend that in each Local Authority should be a specific department responsible for activities dedicated to social economic development. The aim is that we link social economy with social welfare or social policy departments so we advise making these departments responsible for monitoring the situation of social economy development. Lists of detailed responsibilities in that matter should be adjusted to local reality; nevertheless it is



crucial to provide clear information to the public regarding which department is most relevant to deal with social enterprises and at the same time to give clear information of public officers that it's their responsibility to have knowledge in the mentioned topic.

Parallel to raising awareness and educational activities local authorities should approach to the topic in more systematic, wider and long term planning way. It is crucial to look at this point from 2 perspectives. One concentrated on the social economy sector and the necessity of preparing together in a wide partnership (other stakeholders, representatives of social economy sector, experts etc.) a complex plan of supporting social economy sector development on a local level. A plan, which will be adjusted to local conditions, capacity and needs. The second perspective is connected with the procedure of including social economy in strategic plans of local authority as important element of local growth, social inclusion and building labor market. Taking under consideration this two perspectives the recommendations in that matter are simple:

Strategic planning - a poorer part of the European Union is painfully touched by the lack of long-term thinking. There is a strong concentration on problem-solving instead of dealing with their source.

The actions are made ad hoc without a moment for reflection on how to avoid similar problems in the future. Here we use the example of smog, which particularly affects southern Poland and the city where these recommendations are written. Poland and Bulgaria are struggling with the worst air pollution in Europe. The problem stems from economic issues (expensive district heating and gas, much cheaper coal, the cheapest waste from its production), the strong position of the mining industry (especially trade unions) and cultural factors (the current situation has been continuing for several generations, so many people see it as the norm). At the same time Poland is a country with a relatively low number of cooperative producing energy in Europe. "The almost complete lack of energy cooperative in Poland is becoming a phenomenon in the European Union - says Ilona Jędrasik for the portal [Ekonomiaspoleczna.pl](http://ekonomiaspoleczna.pl)¹. Germany, in 2013, operated 888 energy cooperatives. Some even have several hundred members. Cooperatives dependent on the production, transmission and distribution of energy are also a common form of association in the United Kingdom, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Belgium, and recently also in France, Spain, Croatia and Greece".

Unfortunately, in discussions on solving the problem idea of energy cooperatives is unnoticeable. There is no broad debate on the subject, the lack of goal setting and strategic thinking in the form of answers to the problems underlying source. In developing countries the business (not just local) often follows the rapid consumption of the profits, regardless the geographic location the third sector very often follows the call for proposals rhythm instead of own development strategy, while the political class - the length of the cadence.

We recommend, therefore, strategic planning with a big commitment to the social partners, and breaking the existing stereotypes, search for new partners to diagnose and solve local problems or face the challenges.

Possible activities:

- Include social economy sector in local strategic documents for example connected with social inclusion, local development, entrepreneurship development, enhancing the labor market.
- Diagnosing social situation of citizens together with other stakeholders interested in the topic as well with representatives of social enterprises or potential social entrepreneurs (for example NGOs leaders).

The next type of activities that should be taken by local administration are related to direct support mechanisms which should be the tools to achieving the strategic goal proposed in local development documents. In that matter we see few elements and recommend providing:

Financial support in the form of grants, concessional loans and other financial mechanisms.

Developing business, especially in the case of persons belonging to groups at risk of exclusion or enterprise where this group of people should find an employment or in case of enterprise dedicated to providing social services, requires financial support. What's interesting - business systems in the form of micro-loans or micro-donations performing better in the poorest countries and highly developed than in developing countries such as new EU members² (an example can be the development of Grameen Bank of Muhammad Yunus, Nobel Peace Prize winner in 2006). Such forms, which are small grants or repayable instruments, seem to be the better option, than other cases like high grants where the real threat is that the received money will be used just for current consumption (risk of

¹ (<http://www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/wiadomosc/1674038.html>)

² Definition according to International Monetary Found

creating social enterprises just to receive a grant which after the expiry of the granting contract stop its activity). Currently, without a doubt, one of the main incentives for the development of social enterprise sector in our project partner countries is the financial support for such enterprises offered by European Fund or national system of grants. This situation is ambiguous and on the one hand gives a strong impetus to the development of such entities and focuses attention of potential social entrepreneurs, on the other hand, it is related to bureaucracy and brings with it the risks mentioned before: a high risk of creating social enterprises as a response to the call for proposals, not as an answer to local needs.



The obvious fact is that besides financial capital an important factor of social enterprise success is human capital – meaning well prepared, professional management staff, ready for education and gaining new skilled workers, both dedicated to social enterprise sustainability and to development. Good social startups require independence from a social entrepreneur, a well-prepared leader, manager who will be able to combine social and business skills. If we would like to present competences of the social enterprise manager the catalog would be long and very diverse, so just to give few examples: creativity, leadership skills and charisma, readiness to share power – providing participatory decision mechanisms, conflict management skills, strong ethic principles, sensitivity for social problems, readiness to take a risk, flexibility, innovation, ability to find business niches, ability to build business relationships with partners and stakeholders.³ Without any doubt the proposed list of competences is not closed but it clearly shows that a social entrepreneur is a peculiar hybrid of social activist and businessman.

The role of the local government should be primarily the creation of a climate for their establishment, search and bringing together interesting solutions, pairing potential partners and in some countries also becoming one of the shareholders of social enterprise (establish a social cooperative of legal entities, establish a non-profit company). This will strengthen its role and commitment to local growth. Certainly local authorities should not have the role of the parent or controller as a social start-up should be an independent entity but its duty is inspiring, stimulating and supporting initiatives contributing to better quality of life.

In terms of financial support we should not forget also about socially responsible public procurement, as nothing influences the financial sustainability of social enterprises than a stable, solvent business partner.

In that manner local authorities should take under consideration the Directive 2014/24/EU of The European Parliament and of The Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC.⁴

One of the Directive's greatest achievements is the shift from using the lowest price criterion to assess bids, to the Best Price-Quality Ratio. With BPQR, contracting authorities will be able to integrate quality, social and/or environmental considerations in the award criteria.⁵

³ „Cechy i kompetencje menedżera społecznego” Martyna Wronka-Pośpiech, *Ekonomia Społeczna – półrocznik*, 2014

⁴ http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2014.094.01.0065.01.ENG

⁵ Public procurement for social progress. A Social Platform guide to the EU Public Procurement Directive, Social Platform, 2015



Other important elements are social clauses, which allows that public contracts can now be reserved for sheltered employment undertakings whose aim is to bring employment to disabled or disadvantaged persons (including long-term unemployed or members of disadvantaged minorities), where this category of employee makes up over 30 percent of the staff. For certain health, social and cultural services, contracts of a maximum length of three years can be reserved for non-profit undertakings pursuing a public service mission.

What is also important to underline is a fact, that recalled above Directive have to be implemented to all European Union Member States legislations till 18th of April 2016 so sooner or later it will be common process of public procurement.

Possible activities in terms of financial support:

- Provide an opportunity for social enterprises to receive by local authority bank guarantees for investments.
- Implement social clauses in public procurement.
- Implement socially responsible public tendering (modify the criteria for tendering including not only criteria of prices but also social benefit aspects and favors for financially sustainable organizations.)
- Bringing to local level institutions, instruments providing financial support grants for social enterprise development, close cooperation with these institutions (centers of supporting social economy, socially responsible financing institutions for example: loan funds, cooperative banks who deliver preferential loans, credits, social bonds) or at least providing complex information about possible mechanisms at national level (European Social Funds, national or regional instruments of social inclusion) and European level (for example Program EaSi – Employment and Social Innovation, Progress).
- Participate in public-private partnerships with social enterprises due to better and more efficient execution of public tasks.
- If national legislation allows providing a mini – grants system dedicated to capacity building of social star-ups.

Creation of a comprehensive system of substantive support (advisory, trainings, etc.) for those who are interested in the social economy development, advisory services for potential social enterprise leaders.

In none of the countries around the Baltic supporting system is not universal and what is more important is not well recognized by potential beneficiaries. Task for local authorities, as one who knows the best local business conditions and social problems arousing the strongest emotions in terms of substantive support is providing basic information about the social economy sector, possible path of establishing social enterprise, connecting interested in the topic leaders with supporting institutions, etc.

Carry out systematic monitoring of current status of local social enterprises, their needs, lacks to provide more adequate support but in the same time to have information of their potential and capacity.

Carry out systematic market research and analysis on the need for local social services. It's an area that should definitely depend on local authorities. In the current situation, even if the representatives of the local government have the will to support the presence of social economy entities in local market typically do not have a verified knowledge of the social services market size, potential and specifics. As far as local authorities know the answer about housing shortage, what is the shortage of places in nurseries and kindergartens, as quickly aging society is, we observe the lack of diagnosis, updated information, whether the service has a chance to be sold on open market or payed by municipality or rather launch this services will be needed in nearest future and which method of its provision is most efficient. The database of the demand for social services is the best clue for start-ups what economic activities they could start.

Necessity of testing innovations and new paths of development - the flowering of social entrepreneurship requires open minds. Local authorities interested in ensuring that in their territory such social enterprises are incubated should provide conditions for conferences, training and seminars on economics sharing, social innovation and similar new trends.

Possible activities in terms of substantive support, researches and innovations:

- Appointment a department and public officer at the local municipality office responsible for social economy development (officer with at least basic competences in the topic of social economy and social start-ups).
- Providing clear information for potential social entrepreneurs, business partners interested in cooperation with social economy entities, etc. to whom in municipality office they can approach in terms of receiving support.
- Cooperation with national, regional or local institution of support for social enterprises providing basic and specialized support.
- Providing and distributing educational materials for free, prepared by supporting institutions for potential social enterprises, in terms of establishing, running social enterprises as well in terms of new trends and innovations in the field of social economy.
- Initiate conferences and seminars about innovative approaches to social economy or at least providing and distributing information about that kind of events through public communication channels.
- In case of no access to external supporting institutions providing a basic advisory in terms of establishing social enterprise, delivering sources of more information.
- Providing and updating data base of demands for social services, what can be inspiration for social start-up in terms of subject of sustainable economic activities.

Initiate cooperation between business and social leaders. The recipient of this research should be firstly social entrepreneurs and businessmen, nevertheless the positive climate of cooperation, and tools can also apply to the local administration. The researches and other statistics, show widespread problems based on the fact that social enterprises are usually established by social leaders, those who are guided by social ideas, willingness to help, but without business knowledge. In a few cases social enterprises arise from the initiative of people prepared to run the company. We can observe the lack of balance in that terms so local authorities should take possible steps for changing this situation. One of the possibilities is initiating the meeting of social leaders and businessmen to share knowledge, experiences, break the stereotypes or even share an idea for business to receive a feedback or gain a potential investor.

Possible activities in terms of enhancing cooperation between business and social leaders:

- Organizing a platform of exchange like: business fairs (initiated by local authorities, local economic, etc.); formal and informal meetings.
- Inviting local businessmen to become a Social Business Angel (organizing presentation of business ideas at meetings for potential sponsors or just advisors).



This presented recommendation probably for many local authorities will be estimated as too demanding. Of course there is no obligation to implement all proposed solutions. The most important is willingness for supporting development of social economy sector and providing the right atmosphere and conditions; this is the best medium for all social start-ups. But remember only ambitious goals and systematic attempt to achieve them can bring a real, stable and long term social change.

Local authorities units are one of the most important actors on the stage of development of the social economy. But do not forget that first and foremost the responsibility for success, for survival on the market, for winning customers and for building a good team, etc. is of course on social enterprise, its creators, members, employees, board members, directors, managers, the internal organs of control.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOCIAL ECONOMY START-UPS IN TERMS OF CHOOSING AN EFFECTIVE PATH FOR DEVELOPMENT

Regarding the recommendations for social start-ups, they are for those in the process of formation but also those social entities that have existed for a long time. But we focused mainly on aspects analyzed in the framework of this publication, meaning: legal environment, external support, human resources and creating the image.

MYTH 1.

Services offered by the social enterprise must be cheap because they are of low quality, so price competition is the only way to conquer the market.

Fact: Initiators of creating a social enterprise have to be ready to take a risk. The biggest challenge is to create a coherent product strategy and being determined to its consistent implementation. It is indeed a challenge for the whole social economy sector, to build the image and strengthen the belief in the high quality of the products and services offered by social economy entities. Public awareness based on reliable knowledge and transparency is one of the critical success factors of a social enterprise.

MYTH 2.

Social enterprises have little in common with “real” business and the people working there are not full professional employees and their managers are social leaders without business acumen.

Fact: Running a social enterprise in part of running the business is not much different from the running an “ordinary” company. Requirements for managers of social enterprises are no less demanding, on the contrary, and the range of expected competence is much broader. Since it is assumed that they must have not only the ability to conduct business, but also high social skills, the ability to work with specific group of people, conflict resolution, team building, as well as a wide range of skills related to external fund raising such as grants and subsidies.

What then should be implemented, what do we recommend to social start-ups initiators in the beginning of their social enterprise existence to provide an effective entry to the open market?

In terms of legal framework we recommend:

- Take the time to gain greater knowledge of the social economy sector and the multitude of legal forms that can be a social enterprise. The choice of legal form affects the management system, billing, possibility of obtaining external funding. Legal form also implies a way of making decisions, the existence of the membership of the management and control bodies operating within the social enterprise. Therefore, the time spent on a good diagnose of own resources, consultation with an attorney, accountant, advisor for social enterprises and also benefit from the experience of other social entrepreneurs, will certainly not be lost.
- Explore the possibilities of the chosen form of the legal terms of obtaining external funds and the use of other forms of public support.
- Explore the possibilities of social franchising – using already-working mechanisms.

In terms of human resources:

- Remember about clear and specific separation of roles, duties and responsibilities, particularly in the social enterprise, in which the role of member joins the role of the employee. Determine how decisions will be made and provide mechanisms of respecting this rules.
- Provide for the social enterprise management team constant self-development mechanisms, training for management staff in the fields of business: management systems, teambuilding, customer service, streamlining processes, sale, improvement of the quality, etc.
- Provide for the social enterprise working team constant self-development mechanisms regarding their professional skills, providing vocational trainings, and if needed training about social competences, etc.
- Enhance among the team skills related to the resolution of conflicts and the building of harmonious co-operation.

In terms of external support mechanisms:

- Carry out research about available supporting and development mechanisms like advisory, financial services and define the institutions that provides those services, starting from local authorities.
- Participate in local, regional and national sectoral meetings during which decisions are made or are made recommendations for the highest levels of government in terms of supporting social economy development, participate in the creation of new legal and practical solutions for social entrepreneurship.
- Establish contacts and cooperation with local government units, NGOs, social economy, as well as commercial enterprises first at a local level.
- Find and update information about local social clusters, and social enterprise networks.
- Treat time spent by employees on consulting and training as an investment, not a cost.
- Learn how to gain external funds and how to use it in proper way, and combine different types of financing activities.

In terms of image creation:

- Create a coherent and integrated strategies for the social enterprise and its communication with the environment, creating brand strategy and consistently implement them.
- Take action with the feeling of responsibility for the development of the local community.
- Work on the self-esteem of social enterprise, especially in terms of cooperation with business and local government. Showing the benefits of social economy, creating a brand based on quality and aiming to financial viability.
- Not to build the image of the entity, which requires constant external support and special treatment due to its noble goals, regardless of the team engagement or its financial and business results.

