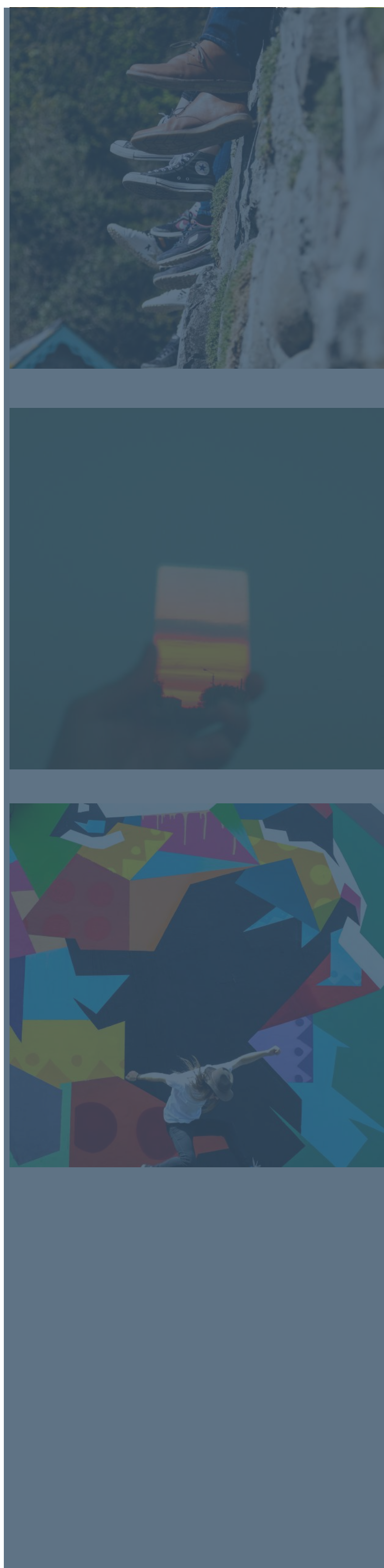




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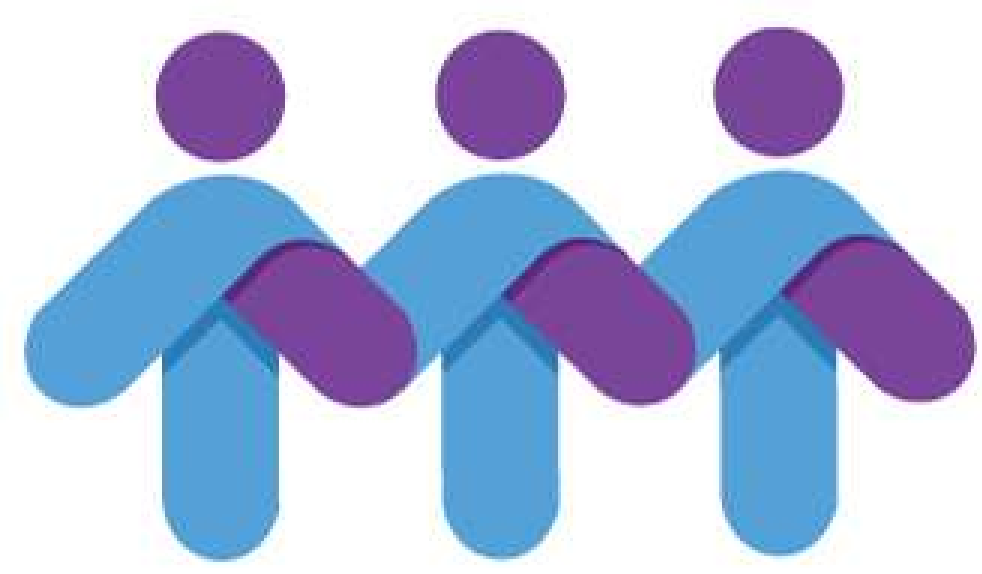


PARTNERSALBANIA
FOR CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT



Social Economy among **#youth** in Albania

HARVESTING BEST PRACTICES
AND RECOMMENDATIONS



WB SEA

Western Balkans Youth Social Economy Alliance



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CHAPTER 1

1.1 General socio-economic overview about your country

Albania as part of Eastern Europe was the last country to transition from communism into democracy amid economic collapse and social unrest. Nonetheless, this new course of the country sprouted great hopes especially among the young generation. Albania over the years has implemented a range of structural reforms to integrate in the European market and boost economic development. Although, despite many existing policies covering innovation and entrepreneurship and a bold policy push by the government to create a favourable environment for investors, it has not been able to attract significant foreign finance sources.[1] In the progress towards joining the EU organizational important reforms are being implemented, to support balanced development, increase of competitiveness and productivity in economic terms, generate employment, enhance civil-service responsibility, accountability and good governance. Today Albania counts a population of 2.845.955, scoring a drop of 0.6% on January 1st 2020, and a median population age of 37.2 years (where male 36.3 and female 38.2 years old). Other key figures to consider are the employment rate that scores 52% and average gross monthly wage 54.951 ALL (about 446 Euro)[2]. The government has set an increase in the minimum wage starting from January 1st 2021, from 26,000 ALL, to the current 30,000 ALL (about 244 Euro). According to annual basis data, current GDP was estimated USD 15.3 Billion, while GDP per capita is 5.325 USD for the year 2020[3]. In November 26th 2019 a destructive earthquake hit Albania. In response to the devastating consequences, the conference organized by donor's in Brussels, on February 2020, guaranteed about 1 Billion EUR from countries and financial institutions. Covid-19 crisis only exacerbated the financial situation and response in the course of rehabilitation attempts. Many organisations and donors have joined forces to collaborate with the Albanian Government in transcending these present obstacles and re-establish a sustainable development path for future objectives. The economic challenges have affected strong demographic movements. The number of emigrants in 2019 was 43,835 persons, indicating an increase by 13.3 % compared to the previous year. While the immigrants feature was 20,753 persons, showing a decrease by 12.3 % compared to the previous year[4]. Although Albania has implemented a range of structural reforms, regulations to boost productivity and competitiveness, and thus create more jobs, are weakly implemented. The private sector remains underdeveloped and the focus of the government with regard to economic policies has been on creating a favourable environment for investors and on regional and European trade integration[5].

[1] Kate Hach & Eileen Trenkmann (2019), Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Albania with Focus on Tirana, EU for Innovation, page 3.

[2] Bank of Albania Exchange rate on 31st March 2021.

[3] The world Bank, Albania Overview (2020), Available at:<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/albania/overview>

[4] INSTAT, Albania's Population 1 January 2020, http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6850/population-on-1-january-2020_.pdf

[5] Kate Hach & Eileen Trenkmann (2019), Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Albania with Focus on Tirana, EU for Innovation, page 7.

1.2 Being young today. Demographic trends and other relevant data about youth

A) Being Young Today

- **General youth demographic trends**

Positive steps like NATO membership in 2009, the beginning of the EU accession process and successful reforms in fighting crime and corruption in the last 2 decades have created a positive environment for social and economic development. However, these positive steps have proved to be lacking in order to incentivise and motivate young people to stay in Albania. There is in general a tendency to seek education and employment abroad among the youth. In December 2019, Albania has approved the **Law No. 75/2019 "For Youth"** that determines "**Young people" as young persons, who have reached the age of 15 to 29 years**, and serves as main recommendation for national strategies of education, training and employment under the youth umbrella[6]. Qark of Tirana has the most substantial proportion of youth on account of the accumulation of possibilities in education and employment: 27% against the national average of 25%[7]. On the bright side, Albania has a young population, with a median age of 37.2 years compared to the EU-27 median age of 43.7[8], foreign language skills and a high output of university graduates.

- **Youth and Education**

Social participation of youth indicators shows that during the academic year 2018-2019 the rate of dropout from the secondary education was 2.6%, the rate of young people enrolled in tertiary education was 59.5% and the rate of young people graduated from tertiary education was 26.7%. These indicators show improvement when comparing to the previous period. In 2019 graduated pupils in upper secondary education[9] have a drop of 3.6% compared to a year before (where 47.9 % boys, 52.1 % girls) and the gross graduation ratio (GGR) is 84.6 %. Graduated of Vocational Education make up 11.2% of the total graduates in upper secondary education. Students graduated in tertiary in 2019 are 1.6% more than in 2018, where (66.4 % women - 33.6 % men). Graduates in Bachelor programs consists 53.6 % of the total graduate students. The programs where more students are graduated, are "Business, Administration and Law" of 27.8 %[10].

- **Living conditions such as: young people living in households with their parents, at risk of poverty or land at risk of social exclusion, young people with a migrant background, young people living in suburbs or rural areas**

Financial autonomy intent in Albania's capital and some major municipalities, lead to a population shift of youth towards these urban areas. This shows a drive of youth to reach autonomy and release from conventional household norms. Youth in Albania consider besides family, friendly and social connections and way of life a significant factor of their communal recognition. Over 70% of young Albanians' want to leave because of poverty, unemployment, social exclusion and corruption considered the main causes of immigration. Although, the under 30 age group, being approx. 1/3rd of the population, their participation in decision making processes and social life remains very low[11]. In regard to youth from vulnerable community, the INSTAT doesn't produce statistics on the ratio from Roma and Egyptian strata, youth with special needs and from the LGBTQ+ group.

[6] Law No. 75/2019 "For Youth", Official Gazette 171/2015 180/2019, <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/fz/2019/180/7d10ef94-7c6e-4988-8c5d-362df7023217;q=Ligji%20per%20rinine>

[7] B. de Bruijn, Gj.Filipi, M.Nesturi, E.Galanxhi, (2015), Youth in Albania: Challenges in Changing times, INSTAT, http://www.instat.gov.al/media/3548/youth_in_albania_challenges_in_changing_times.pdf

[8] Eurostat (2020), Population structure and aging, Eurostat Statistics Explained, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing#Median_age_is_highest_in_Italy

[9] Upper secondary education is the equivalent to "high school" that includes grades 9 or 10 through 12; Term used by the National Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) in line with Albanian legal framework on education;

[10] INSTAT (2020), Graduation statistics, page 2; <http://www.instat.gov.al/media/6958/graduation-statistics.pdf>

[11] Partners Albania (2020), Youth (un)employment in Albania-An analysis of NEET and vulnerable youth, page 5

- **Digital world**

The digitalisation process has two sides: on one has made far-reaching changes in the way we live, on the other it has also revealed a new fracture in society, the so-called digital divide. However, the skills required to use the internet access to high-speed internet services are not evenly distributed[12]. The results of ICTS show that during 2020, 72.2% of the population group age 16 – 74 years use the internet, of which 88.2% use it every day. The highest percentage are individuals that access internet by their mobile/smart phones rather than laptops or tablets. The use of the internet among young individuals aged 16 - 24 was 94.8 %. The use of the internet has recorded the highest percentages for the category “every day/almost every day”, for the all age-groups, including youth[13]. Albania’s growing IT services sector combined with the human capital and a well-educated Diaspora – ready and waiting to support Albania with funds and knowledge – is an opportunity that has yet to be harnessed.[14]

- **The main challenges and needs**

The main challenges and needs of youth in Albania are connected to perception and attitudes on issues such as lifestyle, family, education, employment, politics, religion, etc. Young people since during their years of study, try to create a professional identity which will help them confront the challenges of the national, regional and global labour market. However, the connection between education and employment persist troubling them, as their investment in education isn’t translated into secure employment. On the other hand, youth participation in politics and their belief in governing institutions represents a very important component that for most, indifference and disbelief are the main pushing towards youth migration pathway[15].

- **The enablers for promoting the youth empowerment in the country**

The Law No. 75/2019 implementation will encourage youth structure establishments in municipalities, in order to be proactive and promote their work to the whole specter of stakeholders in the city. Main institutions responsible for youth empowerment in Albania, include: National Agency of Vocational Education, Training and Qualifications (NAVETQ), National Employment and Skills Agency (NESA), State Labour Inspectorate and Social Services (SLISS), Ministry of Finance and Economy and Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth. Meanwhile some CSO’s are active in addressing youth needs and working for their empowerment include; "Social Center Murialdo", YAPS Albania, Don Bosko Social Center in Tirana, CRCA Albania, the National Youth Network in Albania (ANYN), etc. According to NESS, there has been continuous donor support through various funding mechanisms to employment, VET and social inclusion policies in Albania.

[12] Eurostat (2020), *Being Young in Europe today – executive summary*, Eurostat Statistics Explained, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Being_young_in_Europe_today_-_executive_summary#The_EU_is_growing_older_.E2.80.A6

[13] INSTAT (2021), *Survey on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) usage in Households and by Individuals in 2020*, Page 6.

[14] Kate Hach & Eileen Trenkmann (2019), *Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Albania with Focus on Tirana*, EU for Innovation, page 4.

[15] G. Kamberi, A. Çela (2019), *Youth study Albania 2018/2019*, The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id-moe/15261.pdf>

B) Youth Employment

- **Stats on youth unemployment**

Despite economic growth, macroeconomic stability and social policies undertaken and implemented by the Government, Albania continues to face troubling problems of poverty, unemployment and inequality, especially in certain areas[16]. In 2019, youth in Albania represented 23.5% of the total population and the official unemployment rate was 21.5%.[17] **NEET representing youth aged 15-29 years old neither in employment nor in education or training** comprise 26.6% of the same age population. In the NEET's group, 36.5% of them are labelled as unemployed where the rest (12.7%) discouraged workers, (18.1%) accomplishing domestic and family responsibilities and (32.7%)[18] inactive for other purposes. During 2019, **informal sector employment** remained high in Albania (36 % of total employment). The official youth unemployment rate for 2020 in total is **20.95 %** (where 21.15% females - 20.85% males). On the other hand, youth employment rate for the year 2020 scores 41.175%, while the youth labour force 52.05%.

- **The trends of youth (in choosing professional path and/or choosing SE for professional path)**

Albania has a high percentage of Tertiary educated people with about 10,000 graduates yearly, while employment opportunities created per annum are only 4,000 jobs, producing an elevated number of youth seeking self-employment[19]. Therefore, it's present a remarkable database of candidates to become entrepreneurs and boost the start-ups ecosystem. Additionally, the Albanian youth is educated is multilingual, other than English, because of the high proportion of youth educated abroad. The vicinity to EU countries, has influenced a growing number of start-ups already harvesting the opportunities of entrepreneurship, in most cases cooperating with EU costumers. A young person starting a business already has a family business background and/or strong entrepreneurship education. In the business environment they are driven by specific goals like work integration of unemployed and/or vulnerable groups.

In Albania, no data are available neither on the structure, type, and number, nor on the economic sectors of young and social entrepreneurs. Young entrepreneurs are eager becoming part of a well-established and free market. Among main needs for success, education (both formal and non-formal), there is a need for professionally tailored trainings, capacity building and mentoring support. Peer to peer support is perceived important in terms of knowledge sharing and mentorship[20]. Some barriers/restrictions for inspiring youth starting a business are a complex of political, economical and administrative factors. Young and/or social entrepreneurs cannot have access to funding instruments, while they face difficulties regarding administration and other bureaucracy related challenges. Business model creation and development is seen as one of the main challenges for youth[21].

[16] Alida Kondi (2019), *Assessment of potentialities for development social enterprises in Albania*, Centre for Competitiveness Promotion, page 9.

[17] Partners Albania (2020), *Youth (un)employment in Albania-An analysis of NEET and vulnerable youth*, page 3

[18] INSTAT, *Labour Market 2019*, page 23.

[19] Kate Hach & Eileen Trenkmann (2019), *Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Albania with Focus on Tirana*, EU for Innovation, page 11.

[20] J. Andjelic, T. Petricevic (2020), *Regional Study and Guidelines on Social Entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans*, RYCO, Page 30.

[21] Kate Hach & Eileen Trenkmann (2019), *Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Albania with Focus on Tirana*, EU for Innovation, page 14.

1.3 State of art on Social Entrepreneurship in the country

Over the years, initiatives have been taken to promote the development of social enterprises, including the establishment of the company "Incentivizing social business", through law No. 10 376, dated 10.2.2011 in order to achieve social and environmental objectives through the support and promotion of social business and microfinance; the start of the activity of Yunus Social Business Albania in mid-2012 which has helped in the creation and financing of a number of successful social businesses; drafting of Law No. 38/2012 "On Agricultural Cooperative companies" which defines the rules, criteria and conditions for the establishment and administration of agricultural cooperation companies. The first law that specifically regulates the organization and functioning of social enterprises in Albania is **Law no. 65/2016 "On social enterprises in the Republic of Albania"**[22]. This law aims to regulate the activity of social enterprises, in order to protect and social inclusion of vulnerable groups. There is no widely accepted definition among the general public as well as within the sector on social entrepreneurship[23]. Due to this vagueness, it is almost impossible to determine the exact number of SE's operating in Albania.

Main Characteristics of SE's: SEs registered as non-profit organisations mainly operate within social services such as therapies, psychological counselling, day-care centres for children and people with disabilities, vocational training and carrier counselling for youth, and soft skills training for children and youth (Hoxha J. 2018). Albanian SE's may be considered as small entities, taking into account their human resources and financial capacities.

Legal Forms of Existent SE's: As stated by the Law, only non-profit organizations that provide goods and services in the sector of development of local communities and disadvantage areas, social services, promotion of health, education services, culture and cultural heritage, promotion of tourism, environmental protection, employment mediation, and youth employment are considered social enterprises. The law overlaps work integration with social services provision; social enterprises have to provide a restricted list of social services to marginalised groups and simultaneously employ a considerable number of people from marginalised groups[24]. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare allocated a fund of 322,500 euros (for 2020) to support the registered enterprises[25]. Only six NPO's got the social enterprise status, and recognized under the Law. Unfortunately, most of the SE's created by CSO's with the support of international donors, did not manage to continue their activities after the end of the project.[26]. Even though, recognized as SE's are NPO's with economic activity with social impact, in practice legal forms operating based on the main principles of SE's include the models below:

- a) non-profit organizations (associations, foundations, and centers);
- b) businesses (sole proprietorship, limited liability company);
- c) cooperatives (companies of agricultural cooperation);
- d) credit and savings association.

[22] Law No. 65/2016 "On social enterprises in the Republic of Albania", Official Gazette 118, Available at: <https://qbz.gov.al/eli/ligj/2016/06/09/65-2016>

[23] Hoxha J. & Haska E. (2019), *Analysis of the Legal Framework on Social Enterprises in Albania*, Partners Albania, Page 7;

[24] J. Hoxha, A. Agolli & E. Haska (2019), *Social Enterprises and their Ecosystems in Europe - Country fiche Albania*, Publications Office of the European Union, Page 18.

[25] J. Andjelic, T. Petricevic (2020), *Regional Study and Guidelines on Social Entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans*, RYCO, Page 23.

[26] Partners Albania (2019), *Overview of Social Enterprises Eco-system in Albania*, Page 5.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 Social Entrepreneurship and the opportunities for youth

In order to empower youth in Albania a lot of National Strategies and Programs are put in place to support Youth and Social Enterprise like the Law No. 65/2016 "On social enterprises in the Republic of Albania" and Law No. 75/2019 "For Youth". Social entrepreneurship is perceived as an activity of for-profit organization (private company) with a social mission, while social enterprises are defined as non-profit organizations embedding the social aim and providing social services, as well as employing persons from marginalized groups (Hoxha J., Haska E. 2019). The approved Law that adjusts social enterprises status and ecosystem, recognizes only NPO's to be registered under it. Since 2016 the synergy, of many organisations, donors and public institutions with focus on social entrepreneurship has highlighted the contribution of social enterprises to the refinement of daily life and welfare in which youth are the most encouraging. Attentiveness in social enterprise it is growing, as noticed by concerned parties and organizations.

The Albanian habitat provides a variety of positive components that start-up environment can develop. There is a lack of Institutional communication towards future possible entrepreneurs, that social entrepreneurship and youth are principle economies. Consequently, the majority of potential entrepreneurs are not motivated to establish a business. Being an entrepreneur in Albania comes with a list of obstacles that one must surpass, with one being the lack of role models in entrepreneurship. With start-ups usually lasting around a year, those who wish to start businesses themselves find it hard to persevere with no current successful entrepreneurs as a role models.[27]. The main stimulation for youth to become entrepreneurs besides the monetary reasons, is the sense of liberty and autonomy. Moreover, the chance to forge a change and generally the chance to grasp and absorb useful labor qualification. The entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship is an unexplored area considering data on youth entrepreneurs in Social Enterprises in Albania[28].

Some examples of supporting instruments during 2015-2017 like the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and Intesa San Paolo Bank Albania have funded 147 SME's directed by women. The Microfinance Institution (BESA) and the European Investment Fund (EIF) have designed tools for the employment and social innovation of small enterprises. These institutions have not targeted specifically Social Impact Start-ups. An initiative of Credins Bank in collaboration with Partners Albania has supported seed funding green start-ups during the past few years. Studies in Albania show that, social enterprises apply four main strategies: a) work integration; b) fair trade enterprise; c) bottom of the pyramid; d) others operating in the field of tourism and culture heritage using social innovation, which are in line with the main clusters identified by the European Commission in 2011. The two main strategies identified are work integration of marginalized groups and fair trade enterprise strategy. Among for-profit entities dominates the fair trade enterprise type followed by work integration, while among non-for-profit organizations prevails work integration and bottom of the pyramid strategy. Only non-for-profit organizations embody the bottom of the pyramid strategy, which consists in delivering social/health/educational services to a certain group of beneficiaries. Social services are an exclusive

[27] Cormier Ch. Saikat Sh. R. MD, Rinkel B. Zheng J. (2016), *Exploring Albania's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem*, WPI & Yunus Social Business Balkans, Page 16;
[28] J. Andjelic, T. Petricevic (2020), *Regional Study and Guidelines on Social Entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans*, RYCO, Page 29.

domain of non-for-profit organizations, where neither public institutions, nor businesses can deliver. Meanwhile, cooperatives follow fair trade strategy, putting the interest of farmers first as the main beneficiary of cooperatives[29].

The success or failure on changing the Social Enterprise status is related to specific factors, which are considered internal and external. Internal factors are related to the management of the organisation, finding qualified staff, know-how on business planning, skills on financial management, etc. In this perspective head of the organisations must have a business-oriented mindset analogous with the social mission. External factors are associated having a comprehensive institutional structure and a friendly habitat to accessing grants. Some of the organisations that feature the characteristics of a SE while they lack the SE status, their activity might not be considered as such. Besides all obstacles social enterprises have been considered as an opportunity for employment and the introduction of innovative services which will serve to make further progress on regard of social and economic inclusion[30]. Entrepreneurial activity in the country is mostly focused on micro and small-scale business activity in areas such as handicraft, tourism and agriculture. High brain drain in the regions is further aggravating the problem and contributing to decreasing start-up activity as the best talent is seeking out for opportunities either in Tirana (Albania's capital) or abroad. In addition, there is a general unawareness about local opportunities among the youth in rural areas in Albania, given the lack of exposure to entrepreneurship activities and low education quality[31].

Related to research, social entrepreneurship is not exploited and researched as an area and there aren't any education institutions with a specific course related to this topic. Besides PA that has specific focus through research and advocacy on social economy and social entrepreneurship there are Epoka University with a dedicated program on social businesses, a prototype of the Yunus Social Business, that has organized various scientific conferences. Metropolitan University has developed lately a module and diverse seminars on this subject. Regardless the fact that the Law anticipates the register for Social Enterprises, such register is not functional yet. No information related to the number of social enterprises and other relevant, measurable data exists. The entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship is an unexplored area considering data on youth entrepreneurs in Social Enterprises. There are some social enterprises registered as conventional businesses in the National Business Center. 679 non-profit organisations (associations, foundations and centers), undertake economic activity however, the NBC does not provide any statistics on their economic activity category. Additionally, Albania has 58 agricultural cooperatives with a total of 1.000 employees. Regarding SME's has 160.624 small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), corresponding to 98.8% of its total number of enterprises[32]. Agricultural cooperatives are small organisations with an average of 10 to 14 members. According to INSTAT, agriculture constitutes the second largest social enterprise sector (INSTAT 2018). Limited liability companies that operate as social enterprises engage in various activities including trade, crafts, food, ecological products, tourism, clothing/accessories, cultural events, day-care centres, and community services. The social aim of each limited liability company is directly related to the social mission of its parent non-profit organisation.

Also the pandemic of COVID-19 has aggravated the situation and is reflecting its negative consequences which beyond the health aspect, have significantly affected the finances of young people where many lost their jobs since March 2020. Apart several measures and policies undertaken from the government, there cannot be reported a clear impact that these measures have had for youth considering that Albanian labor force is mainly composed by youngsters and when considering the official data from the Institute of Statistics, out of 33 000 people who have lost their job during the period April-June, 61% of them were of the age group 15-29[33].

[29] Hoxha J. & Haska E.(2020), Characteristics and Challenges of Social Enterprises in Albania (Baseline Study), Partners Albania, Page 15;

[30] Partners Albania (2021), *A snapshot of financial & support vehicles for Start-ups' growth*;

[31] Hach K. & Trenkmann E. (2019), *Entrepreneurial & Innovation Ecosystem in Albania*, EU for Innovation; Page 16.

[32] J. Andjelic, T. Petricevic (2020), *Regional Study and Guidelines on Social Entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans*, RYCO, Page 24.

[33] Memia A. (2021), *The impact of COVID-19 on youth employment in Albania*, Partners Albania;

2.2 Analysis of currently available services for young people in the field of entrepreneurship

In Albania at present there are many and growing supporting mechanisms available on Entrepreneurship. Some of these supporting schemes have been established and growing while few others require more promotion among the sector.

There is in place a pool of actual supporting and financial instruments such as (accelerators, Business Angels, Venture Capital and incubators), focused on start-up orientation for accessible supporting mechanisms. The Table for mapping of potential key stakeholders in youth entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship encapsulates the primary essential players involved in entrepreneurship ecosystem in Albania. Various of these available instruments that support entrepreneurship, are available in Albania and in the WB6, are grouped below as per their program target, aiming support of start-ups.

Partners Albania has pioneered the analysis of social entrepreneurship in the country, covering subjects of mapping, challenges and possibilities in local markets, funding opportunities and institutional support, the possibilities to grow and the role of politic and non-politic bodies in social entrepreneurship progress.

Some of the most well-known programs that Partners Albania has implemented in this regard are:

- **Green Ideas Competition** – a program focused on start-ups and social entrepreneurship, supervised by Partners Albania as the counterpart of Balkan Green Foundation; More information at: <https://partnersalbania.org/News/konkursi-i-bizneseve-te-gjelberta/>
- **Social Reuse of Confiscated Assets** (C.A.U.S.E - Confiscated Assets Used for Social Experimentations) - the first initiative of its kind, implemented in Albania and in the Western Balkans, aiming to establish a model of sustainable re-use of confiscated assets from organized crime by civil society organizations; More information at: <https://partnersalbania.org/publication/broshure-mbi-projektin-c-a-u-s-e-perdorimi-i-pronave-te-konfiskuara-per-sipermarrje-sociale/>
- **EMBRACE program** - supported by EU Delegation in Albania and managed by Partners Albania provides grant support and capacity building for social enterprises; More information at: <https://partnersalbania.org/embrace-modele-sipermarrjeje-qe-ndertojne-marredhenie-dhe-ekonomi-krijuese/>
- **Work 4 Youth** – a cross-border cooperation program that contributes to increased employability and fostered social inclusion among young people in the cross-border area Albania – Montenegro; More information at: <https://partnersalbania.org/News/work4youth/>
- **Dua Partner Invest** – a platform supported by Partners Albania for start-ups with focus in social entrepreneurship that will serve as a virtual accelerator in the region of WB6; More information at: <https://www.duapartnerinvest.com/homepage>

Through these programs PA has supported 45 SE's and green start-ups, impacting directly more than 145 individuals, and the involvement of more than 3500 direct beneficiaries[34].

Other supporting programs and donors of entrepreneurship as part of their social impact activity in Albania are as following:

- **RISE program** – a regional program supported by RYCO which has established local structures in the Western Balkan to enhance youth social entrepreneurship;
- **UK-Albania Tech Hub** - supported by British Embassy in Tirana supports tech startups, but also ideas generating social impact;
- **EU for Innovation (Challenge Fund)** – is a competitive financing facility, used as a means of addressing the issue of access to finance for innovative companies at an early stage of development, as well as for organisations engaged in services to innovative start-ups and promotion of the Albanian innovation system. Both start-ups and innovation service providers receive capacity building through various forms of technical assistance from GIZ and grants through Swedish Embassy in Tirana, funded by European Union;
- EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in Rural Development (**IPARD**) - is an important support mechanism for Albanian agricultural cooperatives;
- **The Swiss Entrepreneurship Program** - offers peer knowledge sharing, connections, community-building for startups and Albania is part of their coverage;
- **Idea** - a program supported by GIZ (ProSeed) aiming to scale up entrepreneurial competences and business skills of young entrepreneurs;
- **GrowPreneur** – a growth accelerator program for startups at early validation or growth phase (in any field) having at least an initial prototype/MVP, implemented by Yunus Social Business and powered by EU for Innovation;
- Tirana Municipality **“Go-green Grant”** – Grants for stimulating and motivating entrepreneurs to start new businesses that are environmentally friendly, designed to increase environmental sustainability or to develop businesses that are aware of their impact on the environment and to take steps not only to mitigate the damage which cause their production methods and products, but to actively work towards a greener planet;

In recent years, however, the increase in the number of labour force participants with a degree has not been matched by a similar increase in the number of high-skilled jobs[35]. There are 2 existing contous programs respectively at the Epoka University and Metropolitan University (both located in Tirana – Albania’s capital) that provide career path consultation (support in choosing a professional path).Recently a new initiative led by Risi Albania in collaboration with Tirana Municipality has established the first Career Guidance Office at a local level. This service in the municipalities will provide: onsite helpdesk and online platform for students with information on professions, trainings and education; counselling services for all youngsters and more, choosing their field of

[34] Partners Albania (2021), *Contribution of Partners Albania in the Green Start-Ups and Social Enterprises Ecosystem*, Available at:<https://partnersalbania.org/publication/partners-albanias-contribution-in-the-green-startups-and-social-enterprises-ecosystem/>
[35] International Global Organization (2020), *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020*, page 22.

study, entering for the first time in the labor market or seeking to change their job; intermediary for internships and/or job fairs; close collaboration with education authorities to facilitate access to schools, curricula and employment services in order to ensure synergy and provide jobseekers with the required services. Risi Albania is working with Partners Albania to advocate for career guidance service in other municipalities aiming to replicate the example of Tirana. These new practices though, are very limited so the rest of the youth pool is considered disoriented. There is lack of statistics of youth ratio that is employed in public/private sector and the ratio of those selecting an entrepreneurial career.

Sustaining organizations such as (Partners Albania for Change and Development, Yunus Social Business, ICTS Lab, Metropolitan Incubator, Destil Creative Hub, Swisscontact Albania, Coolab, Talent Garden, Center for Competitiveness Promotion) ensure either incubator and accelerator infrastructures, or connected programs. Funding on national level focused startups and social enterprise is almost non-existent. Institutions that offer financial support for startups focused in women, youth, craftsman etc. we can mention AIDA (Albanian Investment Development Agency) and Municipality of Tirana. At ministerial level a small grant is accoutered based on the law "On Social Enterprises", which is yet to be operative. The National Scheme of aid for Rural Development and Agriculture addresses agricultural cooperatives. Albania does not have a national network promoting and advocating the developmental needs and concerns of its social enterprises, which hinders their growth and is considered one of the main challenges to their further development[36]. Considering research, entrepreneurship is not deeply surveyed and researched as a subject.

[36] J. Hoxha, A. Agolli & E. Haska (2019), *Social Enterprises and their Ecosystems in Europe – Country fiche Albania*, Publications Office of the European Union, page 34.

2.3 Key activities + featuring 2-3 best practices

INSPIRING Practices

2.3.1 Inspiring Practice 1 - “Rinora Handmade”

Rinora Handmade was established in 2017 and registered as a sole proprietorship company but its economic activity started recently beginning of 2020. It is an innovative, creative, ecological entrepreneurship and its purpose and vision is focused in production handicraft and natural products “Made in Albania”. In addition to the environmental impact that their products have by being ecological their vision includes the venture to have an impact on the community by employing in short time jobs (during the harvesting period of the loofah) women and young girls coming from marginalized community. *Rinora Handmade* creates its own design and products with main focus in production of artisanal soap and natural loofah sponge. Out of their annual income amount currently all revenues 100% are being reinvested in the enterprise for its growth and this trend is expected to continue for the next 2 years. This company donates 10% of the yearly profit to women and girls of disadvantaged group, fulfilling its social mission.

The activity is pure innovation for Albania social enterprise ecosystem, as for the first time an ecological product such as natural loofah sponge is produced and is an alternative to synthetic sponges. Their natural loofah farm reaches 1.2 ha and they apply best agricultural practices in the cultivation of this plant and for its processing and storage infrastructure. Thus investments in infrastructure and raw materials are minimal, their presence is already on the domestic market, raising awareness, educating it and marketing their products, but also the international market remains on their target. Also a second product line, handicraft soap, is added from the beginning of the activity. They own the workshop which is equipped with all the necessary tools and materials for the soap production. The raw material like olive oil they provide it locally from their own olive farm and when they exceed the amount required they buy it from other farmers in the area where the activity is located. From the business perspective, ownership of the olive farm and soap workshop enhances the sustainability of the financial activity. Rinora’s initiative is supported by start-up supporting program of EU for Innovation in a match-making Genome B2B that Rinora has put ahead lunch of both products (Sponges and Soaps) on Amazon USA and Amazon FBA.

Social Media Platforms:

<https://www.facebook.com/rinorahandmade/>

<https://www.instagram.com/rinorahandmade/>

2.3.2 Inspiring Practice 2 - “Aloe Vera Center of Albania”

Aloe Vera Center of Albania is one of Albania’s social mission activity enterprise, today’s largest agricultural center of medicinal aloes. The company was established as a sole proprietorship in late 2018 and begun its economic activity in 2019. The enterprise got a boost in the year 2018, where a largest percentage of revenues came from Partners Albania (donors) and private investors, every other income from 2019 onwards derived from

the revenues generated by the financial activity. Expansion, cultivation, processing of production, provided to the highest standards qualities and BIO certification by the European Commission is already in place. This standardization helps a sustainable development enormously tangible for the environment. Their vision is to achieve these goals by working together with vulnerable groups, in order to help with their capacities, the social and economic inclusion of these groups. The key elements that bring innovation to the enterprise are: the type of plants cultivated, the way of cultivation, the microclimate created, the production and its processing. Main products of the enterprise currently are:

- **Aloe Vera leaves** /BIO and HACCP certified according to EC standards;
- **Aloe Vera tea** / BIO and HACCP according to EC standards;

60% of its annual income have been invested in the organization for growth. The staff number increased from the foundation of the enterprise until now and today the number of employees has been doubled. 50% of the employees are women, and 1 person comes from the marginalized groups of individuals who suffered from an aggravated psychological condition. Aloe Vera Center of Albania social mission is achieved by creating a concrete opportunity to implement sustainable development starting from the improvement of these factors: health, economic growth, environmental and also social impact, including the activation of marginalized communities within the respective opportunities. The main factors that make this financial activity sustainable are: the quality of the product, its extensive functionalities in health and cosmetic production, innovation that brings to the local market and the constantly growing demand for products of this type and quality. Their vision, is strongly connected to their growth as an enterprise which consequently touches on some vital links, especially in sustainable development.

Social Media Platforms:

<https://www.facebook.com/Aloe-Vera-Center-of-Albania-306867919908944/?fref=tag>

2.3.3 Inspiring Practice 3 – “Arka e Rinise”

Arka Youth Center is a social enterprise that was set up in 2012 by the organization **Code Partners** which is registered as an NPO. The mission of the organization is to improve: the cultural, social and economic conditions in Shkodra and surroundings, the promotion and development of culture, the development of civil society, the creation of employment opportunities for young people, etc. It aims to contribute to the long-term sustainability of the Arka Youth Center and to strengthen a very important structure such as the Youth Council. Supporting young talented people, youth activities and vulnerable groups are the main activities of the organization. The center provides a safe, caring and supportive environment for an inclusive access to ARKA members and youth in Shkodra whilst promoting cross cultural understanding, youth employment and social participation.

Among the main products and services, the organization performs economic activity which consists of a Bar and Hostel. 100% of the income from economic activity is used for investments in the structure where the economic activity is generated. Currently, the company employs 13 employees, 8 of which are women and 3 employees from marginalized groups of the categories long-term unemployed (over 1 year) and young people who have completed higher education (NEET) but are unemployed. The social impact of this social enterprise consists in activities organized by the center and the Arka Youth Council which both have a significant social impact on the

target groups they work with. The innovation this center brings is generating activity in support, provided to and for the marginalized community, both in terms of employment and self-employment. The Organization receives 19% of annual income from the generation of financial activity and 81% from donations / grants that support social enterprises in Albania.

Social Media Platforms:

<https://arkayouthcenter.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/qendrarinorearka/>

2.4 Mapping of key stakeholders in youth social entrepreneurship

Table for mapping of potential key stakeholders in youth social entrepreneurship

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS	TYPE <i>(teaching institution, youth organisation, etc)</i>	WEBSITE LINK	DESCRIPTION
The RISE <i>(Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs)</i>	Project for youth <i>(Consortium of Organisations)</i>	https://www.risewb.org/	The objective of this project is to address a specific and crucial need in the region in relation to its current context and history: opening new spaces of reconciliation for the youth of the Western Balkans through social entrepreneurship. The project, due to its very regional nature, tends to increase the number of cross-border interactions around social entrepreneurship during the 3 years of the project and thereafter.
UK-Albania Tech Hub	Program	https://ukalbaniahub.com/	This program invites Albanian and Western Balkans tech start-ups for supporting their applications.
Yunus Social Business	Incubator/ Accelerator	https://www.balkanimpact.com/	They provide new entrepreneurs the skills and tools to design, test, build and grow startup initiatives that have the potential to positively impact the lives of people in the Western Balkan countries.

ICTS Lab

Educational
Center

<https://ictslab.com/>

ICTSlab is a regional innovation center, multifunctional laboratory with a focus on non-formal education which aims to prepare young people for the challenges of the 21st century. It was established in Tirana as a fruit of several years of successful experience of ICTSmedia and the support of the Association Nationwide ALBICT Technology.

RYCO

Organisation of
WB6

<https://www.rycowb.org/>

They supporting great ideas, promote reconciliation, trust, cooperation and dialogue in the Western Balkans through supporting and funding projects which bring youth of the region together.

Metropolitan
University and
Metro-
Research

Education

<http://www.metroresearch.com>

Metro Research Ltd offers the comprehensive capabilities and deep industry knowledge necessary to help solving the most complex issues of organizations. Since opening their doors in 2000, they have worked with a wide range of clients and helped them optimize their businesses.

Partners
Albania for
Change and
Development

Organisation

<https://partnersalbania.org/>

Partners Albania is an Albanian NGO, working to support civil society and facilitate inter-sector cooperation in order to strengthen democratic institutions and advance economic development. One of its four programs is Entrepreneurship and

Social Innovation, providing advocacy for advancing the legal and social innovation, support the development of innovative start-ups through the provision of integrated services, advancing the development agenda of social entrepreneurship in the country through involvement in networks in European level, promoting employment and self-employment of women and youngsters through training and support programs for entering the labor market etc.

GIZ Albania

Donor

<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/294.html>

GIZ in Albania is addressing the problems regarding unemployment. Doing so successfully requires a more competitive private sector. For this reason, companies receive support in strengthening their capacities. In the agricultural sector, programmes are helping to improve productivity as well as the economic perspectives of people living in disadvantaged regions. Other focus areas are shortcomings in water supply. Moreover, in many cases waste treatment does not take place according to recent standards. Support in the environmental sector focusses on reducing pollution from solid waste, protecting biodiversity from overuse of the land and preventing floods, particularly in river basins, that might increase due to climate change. Getting closer to an accession to the EU is an integral part of the projects in Albania.

**United Nations
Entity for
Gender Equality
and
Empowerment
of Women**

Organisation

<https://www.unwomen.org/en>

UN Women is the United Nations entity dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality, and in all deliberations and agreements linked to the 2030 Agenda. The entity works to position gender equality as fundamental to the Sustainable Development Goals, and a more inclusive world.

**SIDA
(The Swedish
International
Development
Cooperation
Agency)**

Donor

<https://www.sida.se/en>

Sida is Sweden's government agency for development cooperation. Through cooperation with civil society, multilateral organisations, public agencies and the private sector they work for sustainable development and help create conditions for people living in poverty and oppression to improve their living conditions. Sida also offers International Training Programmes and develops continuously methods and training materials.

**The Swiss
Agency for
Development
and
Cooperation
(SDC)**

Donor

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/sdc>

SDC is responsible for the overall coordination of development activities and cooperation with Eastern Europe, as well as for the humanitarian aid delivered by the Swiss Confederation. The goal of development cooperation is that of reducing poverty.

It is meant to foster economic self-reliance and state autonomy, to contribute to the improvement of production conditions, to help in finding solutions to environmental problems, and to provide better access to education and basic healthcare services.

EU for Innovation

Project of 3 organisations

<https://euforinnovation.al/>

EU for Innovation' in Albania is funded by the European Union with additional support from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) as well as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). EU for Innovation' aims to strengthen the innovation ecosystem and to boost start up creation in Albania.

The Swiss Entrepreneurship Program

Program

<https://swissep.org/>

The Program facilitates the strengthening of emerging entrepreneurial ecosystems to create a thriving, sustainable world. They do this by supporting local ecosystem builders – incubators, accelerators, co-working spaces, angel networks or VC funds – and entrepreneurs driving other meaningful activities focused on building the startup community itself. They operate in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Serbia, Peru and Vietnam.

IDEA

Project /
Program

<https://idea.cefe.net/>

A key element of the program is to contribute to the Albanian Business and Investment Development Strategy 2014-2020 and its second pillar, the Smart Growth: Increasing Labor Force Qualification and the foreseen measures to “develop training programs and respective modules on entrepreneurship”. The objective is to increase the entrepreneurial skillset among owners of new or existing SMEs, who want to expand their business, in order to increase their potential competitiveness in the national and global market. The target group for this project is both men and women who are in the early stages of their entrepreneurial activity (in the process of setting up their businesses or have done so within the last 3 years) or who plan to innovate and invest in scaling up their business.

USAID Albania

Donor

<https://www.usaid.gov/albania>

The current program works with the Government of Albania and the private sector on transformational reforms to strengthen democratic institutions and sustain economic growth. Specifically, USAID helps Albania to: strengthen rule of law, increase the ability of local governments to raise revenue and improve business competitiveness while strengthening the financial sector to better support economic development and financial security.

<p>Swisscontact Albania</p>	<p>Organisation</p>	<p>https://www.swisscontact.org/en/countries/albania</p>	<p>Through their projects, they contribute to equitable economic development, by building sustainable systems for vocational skills development and enterprise promotion. Innovation, labour-market oriented training and private sector involvement are at the core of Swisscontact's interventions in Albania. The goal is to provide more and better economic opportunities and perspectives to all, but especially to young women and men.</p>
<p>Coolab</p>	<p>Incubator / Accelerator</p>	<p>https://coolab.al/</p>	<p>This is the place for entrepreneurs, freelancers, business professionals and technologists who want to be part of an active community.</p>
<p>Center for Competitiveness Promotion</p>	<p>Organisation</p>	<p>https://ccp.al/</p>	<p>The organisation supports business development, entrepreneurship, SME policy, social economy, employment, tourism and cultural heritage through project implementation and consultancy services.</p>
<p>Delegation of EU in Albania</p>	<p>Donor</p>	<p>https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/en</p>	<p>The Delegation's main tasks are the following: Facilitate the development of political and economic relations between the EU and Albania in the framework of the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP), which is the strategy for helping Albania in its path</p>

towards integration into the EU. Managing EU Assistance programmes. Disseminating information on the EU, informing the Albanian general public, decision makers and opinion formers about the integration process, EU institutions and its policies.

Albanian Investment Development Agency

Governmental Agency

<https://aida.gov.al/sq/>


The focus of the agency is to increase the competitiveness of the private sector, strengthen the country's export potential, promote and support foreign direct investment in Albania, as well as promote the country's tourism potential. As an intermediary between foreign investors and the Government of Albania, AIDA provides access to up-to-date information, provides an efficient way of communicating with government bodies and serves as a "One-Stop-Shop", supporting investors throughout the investment process.

Balkan Green Ideas

Consortium of Organisations / Federations

<https://www.balkangreenideas.org/>

Balkan Green Ideas (BGI) is a program that supports the development of local and sustainable small green ideas in the Balkans. BGI aims to stimulate and encourage innovation for green ideas while engaging local communities to generate green businesses that utilize local resources and community-based markets. By supporting innovative, local sustainable economic development initiatives, Green Ideas aims to



substantively contribute to building a peaceful, competitive, resilient and prosperous Balkans.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 Recommendations

Based on the detailed description of the Albanian eco-system of social enterprises and entrepreneurship the challenges and obstacles it faces but also in order to consider the possibilities and circumstances, we are listing some recommendations such as:

- Launching education programmes, starting from secondary school level, in order to involve the citizens in the entrepreneurial operations and the achievement of social economy;
- Provision of economic incentives for producers who bring green products to the market and which support social economies and social schemes (eg. wrapping, accumulators/batteries, electrical and electronic hardware, machinery, taxing schemes etc.);
- Raising economic investments and raising awareness and educate all stakeholders and involve citizens throughout the social entrepreneurship economy;
- Data suggest that 1.4 million Albanians are living abroad and with their remittances which are remarkably supporting the Albanian economy (2017 remittances considered 10.05% of the GDP) show a great possibility to improve use of knowledge, funds also the know-how of the diaspora to additionally expand onto the start-up ecosystem of Albania;
- It is important to ensure that university curricula are of high quality and also that there is sufficient demand for graduates' skills;
- It is critical to promote policies that generate decent jobs (meaning matching job profiles with universities outcome) for young women and men;
- Providing know-how on implementing solid start-ups and social enterprises, also knowledge on accessing funds and approaching to the right financial mechanisms;
- Reforms of the educational systems have been lasting for years and a dedicated curriculum for the formal education programs on social entrepreneurship should be facilitated to be implemented. Considering the public and private finance markets for social and youth entrepreneurs, there is a need of solid programs of social enterprise private investments and a significant strategic focus on start-ups and innovation across the country;
- The country needs more private programs and initiatives that support start-ups and social enterprises, further strategic efforts to engage youth in innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Engagement of governmental institutions with social entrepreneurs and deeper collaboration with European and global financing mechanisms in order to provide a complete support toward the growth of the regional ecosystem;
- **There is no integrated approach to the country. It is therefore recommended that Albania has to transpose and implement EU directives related to the current economy.**

Annex 1

- **Social Enterprises – Best Practices Interviews Templates**

Interview with _____

1. What year were you founded?
2. You are registered as:
 - a) NGO;
 - b) natural person;
 - c) limited liability company?
3. What is the purpose and vision of your company?
4. What are your main products and services?
5. What is your annual income?
6. What percentage of annual income do you reinvest in your organization to expand / grow?
7. What is the current number of employees?
8. Has the staff increased from the beginning of the social enterprise until now? If yes, in which proportions?
9. Of the total number of employees, how many are women?
10. Do you have employees from marginalized groups, part of the staff?
If yes from which groups?
What is the number of employees from marginalized groups in comparison to the total number of employees?
11. What is the social impact of your social enterprise?
12. What is the innovation your activity brings to the market?
13. What makes your financial activity sustainable?
14. What is your plan for expanding social entrepreneurship in the future in terms of market, products, services, employees, social impact?
15. In percentage perspective what are the differentiation of annual income from the generation of financial activity and donations / grants?

Annex 2

Social Economy among youth in Albania – Inspirational Cases



NAME	Rakip Belishaku
Organization/Company	<i>Rinora Handmade</i>
Members/Partners	3 employees, and registered as a sole proprietorship company; Rinora was supported with seed funding by Partners Albania;
Beneficiaries	In addition to the environmental impact that their products have by being ecological their vision includes the venture to have an impact on the community by employing in short time jobs (during the harvesting period of the loofah) women and young girls coming from marginalized community.
Timeframe	<i>Rinora Handmade</i> was established in 2017, but its economic activity started recently beginning of 2020.
Description	Rinora Handmade is focused on production of natural skin care products from loofah plant. They cover all stages from farming, processing and distribution of plant based sponges. Their products are 100 % biodegradable and sustainable alternative to synthetic products. It is an innovative, creative, ecological entrepreneurship and its purpose and vision is focused in production handicraft and natural products “Made in Albania”. <i>Rinora Handmade</i> creates its own design and products with main focus in production of artisanal soap and natural loofah sponge.
Scope	Production of ecofriendly skin care products, natural sponges and artisan soaps. Out of their annual income amount currently all revenues 100% are being reinvested in the enterprise for its growth and this trend is expected to continue for the next 2 years. This company donates 10% of the yearly profit to women and girls of disadvantaged groups, fulfilling its social mission.
Outcomes	Rinora’s initiative is supported by start-up supporting program of EU for Innovation in a match-making Genome B2B that Rinora has put ahead launching of both products (Sponges and Soaps) on Amazon USA and Amazon FBA.
Challenges and Lessons	Thus investments in infrastructure and raw materials are minimal, their presence is already on the domestic market, raising awareness, educating it and marketing their products, but also the international market remains on their target. Also a second product line, handicraft soap, is added from the beginning of the activity. They own the workshop which is equipped with all the necessary tools and materials for the soap production. The raw material like olive oil they provide it locally from their own olive farm and when they exceed the amount required they buy it from other farmers in the area where the activity is located. From the business perspective, ownership of the olive farm and soap workshop enhances the sustainability of the financial activity.
Website	https://www.instagram.com/rinorahandmade/ https://www.facebook.com/rinorahandmade



NAME	Albi Sulo
Organization/Company	<i>Aloe Vera Center of Albania</i>
Members/Partners	<p>The company was established as a sole proprietorship. The staff number increased from the foundation of the enterprise until now. The first year they started with 1(one) permanent employee and 1(one) short-time employee during the harvest months. Today the number of employees has been doubled in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 2 permanent employees (employed throughout the year) 2 employees in the harvest-time (with a short time work contract)
Beneficiaries	<p>Aloe Vera, Center of Albania social mission is achieved by creating a concrete opportunity to implement sustainable development starting from the improvement of these factors: health, economic growth, environmental and also social impact, including the activation of marginalized communities within the respective opportunities. The main factors that make this financial activity sustainable are: the quality of the product, its extensive functionalities in health and cosmetic production, innovation that brings to the local market and the constantly growing demand for products of this type and quality.</p>
Timeframe	<p>The company was established in late 2018 and begun its economic activity in 2019.</p>
Description	<p>Main products of the enterprise are currently two:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Aloe Vera leaves</i> /BIO and HACCP certified according to EC standards; - <i>Aloe Vera tea</i> / BIO and HACCP according to EC standards; <p>Mid-year 2021 they are expecting to release new processed aloe products in the market.</p>
Scope	<p>Expansion, cultivation, processing of production to the highest standards qualities provided and BIO certified by the European Commission is already a fact. This standardization helps a sustainable development enormously tangible for the environment. Their vision is to achieve these goals by working together with vulnerable groups, in order to help with their capacities, the social and economic inclusion of these groups. The key points that bring innovation to the enterprise are: the type of plants cultivated, the way of cultivation, the microclimate created, the production and its processing.</p>
Outcomes	<p>The enterprise got a boost in the year 2018, where a largest percentage of revenues came from <i>Partners Albania</i> (donors) and private investors, every other income from 2019 onwards derived from the revenues generated by the financial activity.</p> <p>50% of the employees are women, and 1 person comes from the marginalized groups of individuals who suffered from an aggravated psychological condition such as anxiety and chronic depression. Today this person has successfully managed this situation much better with the help of the coworkers that came along with the welcoming work environment created.</p>
Challenges and Lessons	<p>Its revenues have had major changes from the first year to the second with an upward trend every 3 months. The first year had an income of about 1,000,000 ALL, while the second about 175,000 ALL. 60% of its annual income have been invested in the organization for growth. They plan on expanding social entrepreneurship in the future in terms of market, products, services, employees, social impact:</p> <p>With the increase of revenues, the expansion is foreseen, maintaining the highest organic standards, intertwined with innovations in the field of spatial management or the creation of microclimates through third factors. Regarding the market expansion, based on the data mentioned above and</p>

present trend would bring a raise of the demand, and consequently the need for expansion and more production, automatically bringing the need for the increase of the number of employees of different marginalized communities in the area. Their vision, is strongly connected to their growth as an enterprise which consequently touches on some vital links, especially in sustainable development.

Website

<https://www.facebook.com/Aloe-Vera-Center-of-Albania-306867919908944/?fref=tag>

NAME	Arka Youth Center	
Organization/Company	<i>Code Partners</i>	
Members/Partners	Arta Nikolli / Arka Youth Council	
Beneficiaries	The organization has in focus the civil society, youth etc.	
Timeframe	This social enterprise that was set up in 2012 by the organization <i>Code Partners</i> which is registered as an NPO.	
Description	Among the main products and services, the organization performs economic activity which consists of a Bar and Hostel. 100% of the income from economic activity is used for investments in the structure where the economic activity is generated. Currently, the company employs 13 employees, 8 of which are women and 3 employees from marginalized groups of the categories long-term unemployed (over 1 year) and young people who have completed higher education (NEET) but are unemployed.	
Scope	The mission and scope of the organization is to improve: the cultural, social and economic conditions in Shkodra and surroundings, the promotion and development of culture, the development of civil society, the creation of employment opportunities for youth, etc.	
Outcomes	The social impact of this social enterprise consists in activities organized by the center and the Arka Youth Council which both have a significant social impact on the target groups they work with.	
Challenges and Lessons	The challenges are in the area of innovation this center brings in generating activity for support, provided to and for the marginalized community, both in terms of employment and self-employment. The Organization receives 19% of annual income from the generation of financial activity and 81% from donations / grants that support social enterprises in Albania.	
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