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## Guidelines for Roma Social entrepreneurship

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## INTRODUCTION

The SERCo project aims to address the issue of social and economic inclusion of Roma communities in the partner countries by applying the concept of social economy as an innovative solution to reduce the risk of poverty and to enhance social entrepreneurship. The project promotes social economy as an effective instrument for integrated development of the Roma communities by:

- 1) Analysing the potential of applying social economy practices within Roma communities, from a social, economic and institutional point of view;
- 2) Engaging policy-makers and civil servants and training Roma mediators for developing social enterprises; and
- 3) Assisting Roma social business initiatives and promoting social economy within Roma communities and the general public.

**The content that we present in this document is about assisting Roma social business initiatives by offering some hints that Roma mediators and Roma social entrepreneurs should keep in mind to boost social economy within Roma communities.**



## AIM OF THE GUIDELINES

To become a social entrepreneur, you should have in mind some steps to follow before starting with your project. These guidelines aim to provide you with advice and recommendations in the different stages of your entrepreneurial adventure.

**They give you information about the following: the meaning of social economy and social entrepreneurship, the attitudes, skills and strategies you must keep in mind when starting to realise your idea, and last but not least, the administrative steps you should follow to set up a social enterprise.**

In order to encourage Roma people to set up social enterprises in their communities, guidelines also provide examples of other Roma who have created their own social enterprise. Their stories can serve as references to those who are worried or fearful about starting their own social enterprises. Finally, this guide also offers different exercises that you can do to overcome your weaknesses and nurture your inspiration while conceiving your project idea.



## WHEN TO USE THE GUIDELINES

**Consult the guidelines when:**

**You don't know what the creation of a social enterprise requires**



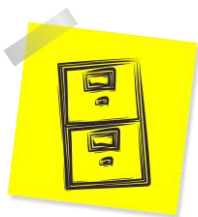
If you feel mistrust toward social entrepreneurship and you don't know exactly what it is, consult the guidelines to get more information and understand if you could be interested in setting up a social enterprise

**You are developing a social enterprise and you feel discouraged and want to clarify your ideas**



This document provides you with information about the steps you should follow, suggests some exercises that you can do to improve your idea, and includes stories that can suggest you other ways of understanding ideas and projects.

**You want to better understand the administrative issues that you might face when setting up a social enterprise**



You should have an idea about the different administrative steps you should follow to legalize your social enterprise and to have access to different social and economic resources.

**You need to know about other Roma businesses and to understand that creating your social enterprise is possible**



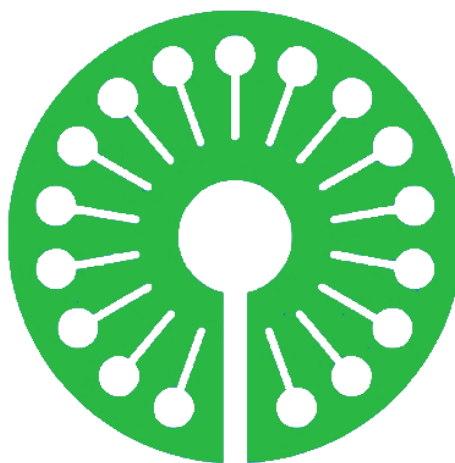
In this document, you can find examples of Roma social enterprises and other experiences shared by other young Roma that might help you when developing your business or to defining your idea.

## APPROACHING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Social enterprises emerge as a new alternative to promote changes on the local level. Social entrepreneurs look for setting up new strategies that might result in improvements in the community. Such social enterprises have reciprocity based organization are based on reciprocity and try to address the socioeconomic needs of the community.

Social enterprises can take several legal forms: cooperatives, associations, community enterprises and associations. The decision-making process of such enterprises is based on a participatory democracy and solidarity relationships.

These types of social enterprises develop projects that usually increase the level of employment opportunities, reduce social inequalities, and promote the community's economic activity. Moreover, they enhance social inclusion by creating new places of work and new community services.





# BECOMING A SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR



## Attitudes for being a social entrepreneur

*Empathetic and generous*

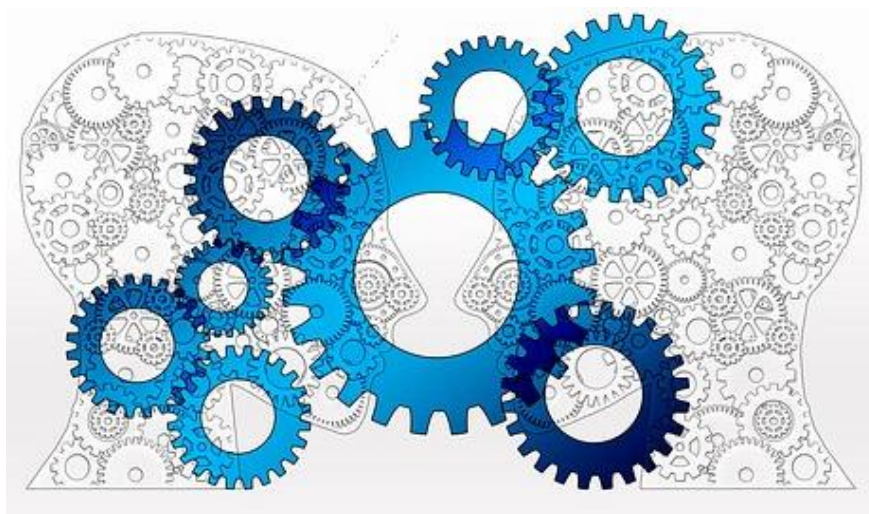
*Enthusiastic and proactive*

*Community leader*

*Committed with community*

*Open-minded*

*Lifelong learner*





*Responsible*

*Creative*

*Motivated*

*Confident*

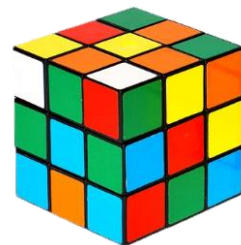
*Curious and innovator*

*Critical and reflexive*



## Strategies for defining your idea

- Identify a need in your community
- Change your idea into a reality
- Develop an idea based on your hobbies
- Identify social demands
- Get inspired by ideas from other entrepreneurs
- Try to invent something new



# Emotional management practices that lead to success

*How to overcome...*

## *Fear of failure*

### **Avoid stress and frustration.**

It is important to understand the difference between what you want to do and what you are doing. Try to define the goals you want to achieve, put them in a time schedule and set deadlines. Then, you will realize whether you can achieve them.

## *Fear of the unknown*

### **Avoid anxiety and barriers.**

Usually, when we do not really know how something works, we always have the feeling that we will fail. But, it is always worthy to try and if we realise that the goals we have fixed are too difficult to achieve, we can always review our idea and set more realistic objectives.

## *Fear of not moving forward*

### **Avoid making hasty decisions.**

The key is not to rush into things or make snap decisions. You should carefully consider your options before making a decision. When creating a social enterprise, you should have in mind that the goal is social growth and professional implication of the greatest number of people as possible.

*Fear of what  
people will say*

**Avoid mistrust.**

You have to be open to constructive critics and should avoid the destructive opinions that can weaken your motivation. When you stop caring about 'what they will say,' you will be ready for success.

*Fear of rejection*

**Avoid trepidation.**

In critical situations, it is normal to feel scared. A business plan is the best form of encouragement that will help you endure in your endeavour and will help you manage your emotional setbacks and keep your fear under control. It allows you to keep track of the project. A business plan will help you in case you run into problems, by making it easier to discover their causes and objectively determine if they can be resolved. A plan can also help you realise whether it is possible or advisable for your social enterprise to grow.

*Fear of losing  
money*

**Avoid rushing.**

There is no single business model that guarantees immediate and effective results. The best is to assess the opportunities you have and to determine what risks you are willing to take.

## STEP BY STEP



### Business ideas: Where do I start?

**The first step is to develop a business idea. Bear in mind that the idea must be realistic, and linked to some social benefits or community services.**

In order to develop a successful idea, it is important to identify those issues that can affect us when we start a social project. To determine what these are we suggest answering the following questions:



## Environment:

Are there customers who can buy what I sell?

Are there any businesses similar or identical to mine?

How can I make myself stand out?

## Reflection:

Will I generate income so I can produce what I sell?

Do I have the potential to satisfy customers?

How can I increase the number of customers?

Will I need to hire employees or can I work independently? What price and value will I assign to my goods/services?

What lacks will I meet?

Who will I sell for?

## Motivation:

What is my vision?

What is my mission?

What are my goals?

What specific actions will I take and for how long?

What are my ambitions?

What is my ideal future?

What can I achieve?

How can I make it happen?

What resources and aid will I need?

With how much money will I need to start?

How will I invest?





## SWOT analysis

**Once we have established a business or project idea, a second step is the SWOT analysis.**

The SWOT exercise may help us to create business strategies that can take advantage of the socio-economic circumstances. In particular, the analysis looks for the internal Strengths and Weaknesses that we have, but also, the Opportunities that the factors can offer us of the potential Threats that they conceal. The aim of this analysis is to boost the strengths and the opportunities while overcoming weaknesses and threats.

Below, we show you the SWOT matrix with some clues about how to fill it. We encourage you to use the

SWOT analysis to help your entrepreneurial adventure.



	Internal dimension	External dimension
+	<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>What advantages does your organization have? What do you do better than anyone else? What unique or lowest-cost resources can you draw upon that others can't? What advantages do you have over the others?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A new, innovative product or service.</li> <li>- Location of your business</li> <li>- Quality processes and procedures</li> <li>- Knowledge, systems and management</li> <li>- Relationship selling with customers</li> <li>- Other aspects of your business that adds value to your product or service</li> </ul> <p><i>Examples</i> Knowledge, background, education, credentials, network, reputation, skills, capital, credit, existing customers or distribution channels, patents, or technology.</p>	<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>What opportunities exist in the environment/market that you can benefit from? Has there been market growth or any other changes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A market such as the Internet</li> <li>- Strategic alliances with other companies</li> <li>- International markets,</li> <li>- Moving to a new market segment that offers better benefits</li> <li>- Inferior competitors or competitive products</li> </ul> <p><i>Examples:</i> New dominant competition, new social desires and needs, other regions and countries.</p>
-	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>What factors, which are within your control, detract you from obtaining or maintaining a competitive edge? What are the areas that should be improved so that you can accomplish your objectives or compete with your strongest competitor? What does your business lack? Does your business have limited resources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Factors that cause you lose your sales</li> <li>- Disadvantages, actions and products to improve</li> <li>- Marketing and communication deficiencies: does your company have a weak market presence or a still undeveloped reputation?</li> <li>- Management staff</li> <li>- Systemic or organizational problems</li> </ul> <p><i>Examples:</i> Low continuity, low financing, poor quality of our product</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Who are your existing or potential competitors? What factors beyond your control could place your business at risk? Are there any challenges that may jeopardize revenues or profits? What situations might threaten your dissemination? Have you considered shifts in consumer behavior, the economy, or government regulations that could reduce your sales? Has a new product or technology been introduced that makes your products, equipment, or services obsolete?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Best competitors</li> <li>- New channels of distribution</li> <li>- Taxation</li> <li>- Plan, demographic and economic changes</li> </ul> <p><i>Examples:</i> How people's purchasing power, possible changes in customer purchasing behavior.</p>



## Roma mediators on social entrepreneurship: *an aid to become an entrepreneur*



In general, Roma mediators can help entrepreneurs to identify and discover hidden needs, generate possible solutions and make decisions. Mediators can:

**IDENTIFY** the needs of vulnerable and minority groups from the local community.

**INFORM** the entrepreneur with useful information

**PROMOTE** education and lifelong learning. Especially encourage women from minority and other vulnerable groups to enroll in literacy and continued education programmes.

**INSTRUCT**, train and teach others about new management techniques.

**ENCOURAGE** young people, women and families to use the available administrative services.

**RECOGNISE** new entrepreneurs and help them to make contacts with local community and the institutions (e.g. governing and financial).

**INVESTIGATE** and find a new way of doing something innovative.

**INSPIRE** leadership, and lead a powerful and experienced group with potential.

**INFLUENCE**, have credibility, and demonstrate experience.





## Administrative issues

**Finally, to create a social enterprise, you must deal with the following administrative tasks. That will help you to take advantage of social resources and policies that can help and support you in the different phases of the development of your enterprise.**

This section presents the relevant steps that you should take in order to create a social enterprise in Europe. If you are looking for nation-specific information you can take a look at the annexes at the end of this document.

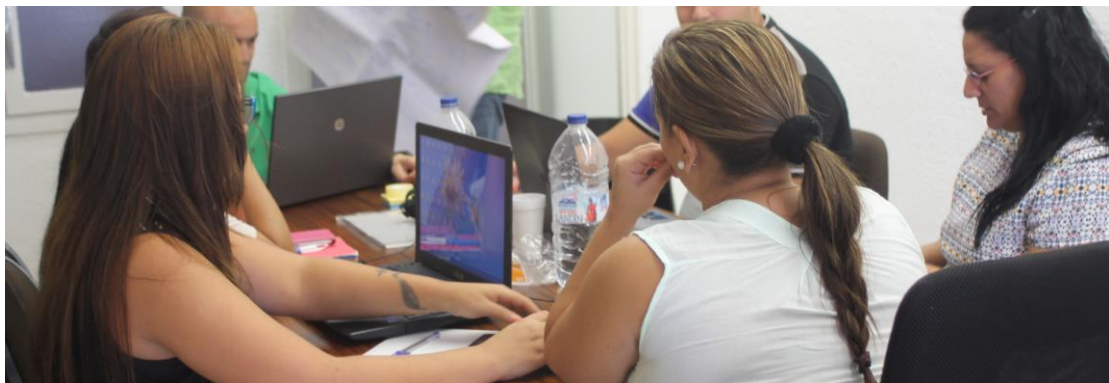
- 1. Financial administration:** you need to be registered for National tax on economic activities and Value Added Tax on consumption (VAT), to get the official declaration for starting activities and a tax ID number.



2. **Commercial register:** registration of the enterprise
3. **Social Insurance National Institution:** registration as self-employed workers, registration to the Social Insurance System and affiliation and registration of the workers in the corresponding regimes
4. **Activity licence:** document that states your equipment is right to start working. You should ask this from the council municipality.

### Useful advice!!!

- ✓ Start early! Administrative procedures can delay the opening of your enterprise.
- ✓ Ask for updated information from the proper administration.
- ✓ Make copies of all documents you submit.

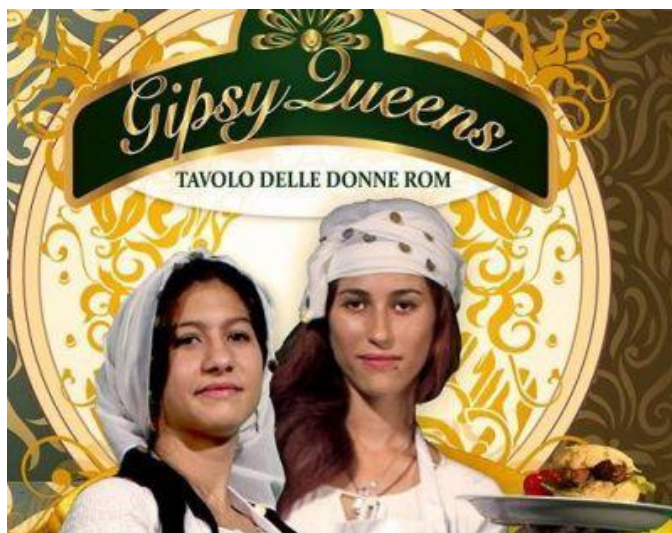


## ROMA BUSINESS

### Stories of success

#### Gipsy Queens:

They are a group of young Roma women from Italy, who are passionate about cooking Roma dishes and promoting ancient flavours coming from Roma gastronomy. They usually organize caterings for different organizations and they also participate in seminars and conferences to overcome prejudices against the Roma community and to promote the labour inclusion of Roma people.



Main features of their social enterprise:

- ✓ Wide enthusiasm and proactiveness
- ✓ High levels of creativity and self-confidence
- ✓ Ability to change an idea into a real project Making your creative idea a reality
- ✓ The activity relates to their hobbies
- ✓ Persuasive
- ✓ Avoidance of mistrust

## Green Think:

This initiative was created with the aim of protecting the environment and promoting a respectful use of natural resources. It consists of a team of 4 young Roma who have different experiences related to information technology and photovoltaic and hydraulic electricity. They usually repair household appliances and other electronic devices



Main features of their social enterprise:

- ✓ Committed to lifelong learning and community compromise
- ✓ Curious and innovative
- ✓ Ability to get over avoid anxiety



## Skytali social enterprise

Skytali social enterprise (<http://koinsep-skitali-com.webnode.gr/>) offers specialized services concerning mediation between the public service and ordinary citizens, including members of vulnerable social groups (unemployed, Roma, foreigners, refugees, immigrants, etc.) in matters of document processing. It may also undertake all the financial obligations of individuals, filing tax returns, family allowances, VAT paying. They also provide counselling information, undertake receiving of medicines from public hospitals for cancer members of the cooperative, service and provide assistance to Roma who encounter problems with recruitment offices.

Main features of this social enterprise:

- ✓ Identifying what is needed
- ✓ Identifying social demands
- ✓ Adapting ideas from other entrepreneurs
- ✓ Community compromise



## ANNEXES

- ✓ Specific administrative steps to create a social enterprise in Italy, Belgium, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria and Spain.
- ✓ Social economy actors and resources in Italy, Belgium, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria and Spain.

(Both annexes are available on SERCo platform)









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