

## Who we are



REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
OF RODOPI S.A (ANRO S.A.) - GR



Municipality of Haskovo - BG



Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Xanthi - GR



Drama Chamber - GR



GNOSI ANAPTIXIAKI NGO - GR



Haskovo Chamber of Commerce and Industry - BG



Reconstruction and Development Union - BG



Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski" - BG



University of Macedonia - Department of Educational and Social Policy - GR



### SOCIAL FORCES

ReinFORCE SOCIAL Entrepreneurial Spirit through setting up Innovative Support Structures in the crossborder Territory

**Share knowledge, Develop together**



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## Background

The CB area includes some of the most deprived and isolated communities of both countries, as manifested by rising poverty rates and high unemployment rates, as a consequence of this labor market breakdown, the CB area exhibits depopulation trends. The prevailing economic recession and fiscal crisis across both sides of the border have further intensified public and private sector disinvestment in social services, further weakening the delivery and sustainability of social welfare policy in the CB area aimed at resolving poverty and social exclusion problems. Also the characteristics of the production system combined with the low education levels and a mismatch between labor demand and supply have led to high unemployment (mainly in the Greek part), poverty and social exclusion. Social enterprises are an important driver for inclusive growth and play a key role in tackling current economic and envi-

ronmental challenges, according to a report published by EU Commission.

In this context, the SOCIAL FORCES project will design and develop common activities fostering awareness of social economy and cooperation for setting up an innovative support structure acting as Social Entrepreneurship E- Help Desk in Greece and Bulgaria, as an asset for local economic development and territorial competitiveness. Also, will encourage knowledge transfer for the social enterprises, in order to familiarize themselves with good management and marketing, examples and exchange of information, having knowledge of the specifics of other social enterprises. Expected results of the project also refer to an increased capacity of the policy makers and stakeholders in detecting the needs of social enterprises in their territories, thus favoring a local sustainable development.

## SOCIAL FORCES Key Facts

• Project Full Title: ReinFORCE SOCIAL Entrepreneurial Spirit through setting up Innovative Support Structures in the cross-border Territory

- Project Acronym: SOCIAL FORCES
- Project Duration: 24 months
- Funding Scheme: Interreg V-A Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020
- Participating Countries: Greece, Bulgaria

## Objectives

The overall objective of the project is to expand social entrepreneurship and contribute to raise employment rates in the Cross Border area.

Also, the main objective is to produce new knowledge and raise awareness enabling people in the CB area,

to fully understand the conditions under which social entrepreneurship starts, develops and can contribute effectively and efficiently to solving societal challenges in a sustainable way. The project seeks to improve the effectiveness of local development policies for economic growth and quality of social entrepreneurs in the Cross Border area.

## Sub objectives to be achieved:

Specific sub-objectives of the project are:

- 1 | to improve the skills and knowledge of policy makers on certain matters such as national and regional schemes for supporting and promoting social entrepreneurship;
- 2 | to find out which regulations and measures enhance this sector as well as to identify unnecessary legal barriers;
- 3 | to allow policy makers to know the most relevant aspects of the legal framework and public policies developed in this sector by each country;
- 4 | to increase the capacity of policy makers and local stakeholders in the detection of social entrepreneurs' needs and the identification of common strategies and best practices encouraging the support and innovation of social entrepreneurs;
- 5 | to raise the number and type of tools available in cross border territory to promote social entrepreneurship models that meet the needs of the local community by identifying and testing of new approaches and the use of joint work and cooperation between factors;
- 6 | to improve the entrepreneurial competences of human resources of social enterprises and people planning to run business in field of social economy;
- 7 | to increase knowledge and skills in establishing and managing the social entrepreneurship entities.



## Results

- Identification and analysis of the regional needs in the field of social entrepreneurship
- Creation and implementation of an ICT tool to improve the level of entrepreneurial skills, to foster the entrepreneurial attitudes and transversal skills of individuals interested in setting up social-economy enterprise or individuals running social-economy enterprise, through exposure to business and real-life situation in the safety way.
- Identification and analysis of the regional needs in the field of social entrepreneurship
- Increase of awareness for benefits from the social entrepreneurship sector for society and economy
- Supplying the existing and perspective social entrepreneurs with a training programme, training material focused on development of entrepreneur's competencies to start and run social-economy enterprise.

