

Questions and Answers

From the GoSocial Introductory and Advanced Training Webinar Workshops

Q: Is it possible for an existing enterprise to transform into a social enterprise (SE)?

A: Yes, by incorporating the minimum conditions that characterize a social enterprise it is possible for an existing enterprise to transform itself into a social enterprise. To find out how, please refer to our [guide to social entrepreneurship](#) to learn more.

It is always important to check and see if there is a legal framework in place regulating the operation of social enterprises within your country. One should look at whether the existing enterprise fits the preconditions set in the legislative framework and make the necessary changes in order to be legally recognized as a social business.

Q: Do all social enterprises have to comply with circular economy principles?

A: At its core, the Circular Economy model is about recirculating goods and materials in the economy for as long as possible, while maximizing the use of resources. Social enterprises can have a leading role in accelerating the transition from Linear to Circular Economy, which needs to be suitable to the local environment and conditions and be community-driven to be effective and transformative. While not mandatory, there is a European and worldwide trend among social and environmental business initiatives to embrace the Circular Economy principles to combat climate change and enhance their company's profile, products, and services.

Q: I have many ideas for a SE, but how can I proceed to the implementation phase? How do I overcome procrastination?

A: There is no perfect time to start your business. Please refer to our [guide to social entrepreneurship](#) for some simple steps to get you started on setting up your social business. Social entrepreneurs do not let opportunities pass them by. If you have a particular idea that you would like to discuss with the GoSocial team and experts or ask for advice and recommendations, do not hesitate to contact us at gosocialcy@gmail.com. We are here to help!

Q: Would you say due to the current economic crisis, social and environmental entrepreneurship will be an alternative way of doing business? If this is the case, what kind of opportunities would this create for entrepreneurs?

A: Social entrepreneurship provides solutions through trading products and services to meet social and environmental needs that public services cannot cover due to a shortage of financial means while the private sector shows little interest in these matters due to low-profit margins. The European Union and its member states call for entrepreneurs to respond to these needs with ideas and innovative solutions to cover the needs emerging from these crises, such as the economic crisis, the refugee crisis, and the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

Q: What can social enterprises do in the future in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic needs?

A: The recent pandemic has highlighted the need of building community-disaster resilience in several sectors that could directly or indirectly improve peoples' collective ability to avoid, mitigate, manage and recover when faced with similar potential pandemics and other economic, social, and environmental crises. Social Enterprises can undertake an important role in this direction through community and grassroots level initiatives that would assist populations in rebounding from disasters. To name a few, social initiatives under pandemic or epidemic circumstances can support health care systems, food supply chain systems, disadvantaged/ vulnerable groups, the unemployed etc.

Q: Can several fields of work be combined into one social enterprise?

A: In many cases, the work of social enterprises covers more than just one area. A good example of such a case in Cyprus is 'Cans for Kids' in the Republic of Cyprus and 'Can Kid' in the northern part of Cyprus. The organizations recycle cans that would otherwise end up in landfills with the purpose of raising money to be donated to hospitals in need of medical equipment.

Q: Is there a special way my CV must be structured to apply for social economy jobs in Cyprus?

A: We recommend using the Europass CV structure to build your CV. When applying for a job in the social economy sector, previous volunteer activities, community work, communication skills, team spirit, and enthusiasm towards working for the social and environmental good are important elements to feature in your CV.

Q: How can a non-Cypriot citizen in Cyprus increase their possibility of finding a job in the social economy sector?

A: We recommend increasing your contacts by networking with local people, stakeholders, and organizations in your area of interest. Hang out with like-minded people and discuss your passion and ideas with successful entrepreneurs. Join networking events, training workshops, presentations, you could even volunteer for NGOs, apply for internships in Cyprus and abroad, invest in your personal development for acquiring digital skills. The more people you meet, the closer you get to the opportunity to show people what you can do.

Q: Will my idea be more successful if I create a team with whom to share my vision so that they can help my social enterprise idea become a reality?

A: Setting your support team is a very important step in the development of your social business. Check out our [guide to social entrepreneurship](#) for some simple steps in setting up and operating your social enterprise.

Q: Can a social enterprise collaborate with governmental institutions or private businesses?

A: Yes, cooperating and networking with governmental authorities, institutions, and other businesses are encouraged to increase visibility and consequently social impact. Many times, especially in cases that the social business involves children, elderly people, and groups with limited resources, the social goal cannot be achieved without the cooperation of all stakeholders.

Q: I am studying social sciences at university. How does the local context in Cyprus support people like me?

A: Social entrepreneurship covers a wide range of working areas aiming to find solutions to community problems and provide support to groups with limited resources. Follow your passion and vision. Social entrepreneurship is all about creating opportunities and being creative.

Q: Are there any SE examples related to the arts?

A: Yes, there is a range of creative social enterprises around the world. Just about any professional or creative practice can be the foundation of a social enterprise. You can see some examples of creative social enterprises by clicking [here](#).

Q: In the northern part of Cyprus, people working in the public sector are not permitted to start their own private companies. Do the same limitations exist in the Republic of Cyprus? Will this be different when the company in question is a social enterprise?

A: Unfortunately, the same limitations exist in the Republic of Cyprus. The main concept of social entrepreneurship is to provide new jobs and opportunities for unemployed people or those with limited resources and abilities whether they are coming from low economic backgrounds or geographically-remote and underdeveloped areas.

Q. Do you need to have funds and initial capital to start a social enterprise?

A: Many times, a small initial fund and/or in-kind contribution from family and friends or volunteers that support your cause and believe in your vision, are enough to make a good start. You can even start your business from the laptop of your home to minimize initial expenses.

Q: If you could choose one good idea for a Social Enterprise in Cyprus, what would it be?

A: Any new or innovative idea which involves recycling, repairing, and the reusing of waste materials would be a good social business for Cyprus.



This Project is funded by the European Union and implemented by the Famagusta Walled City Association (MASDER), AKTI Project and Research Centre, and the Famagusta Women Centre Association (MAKAMER).



The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.