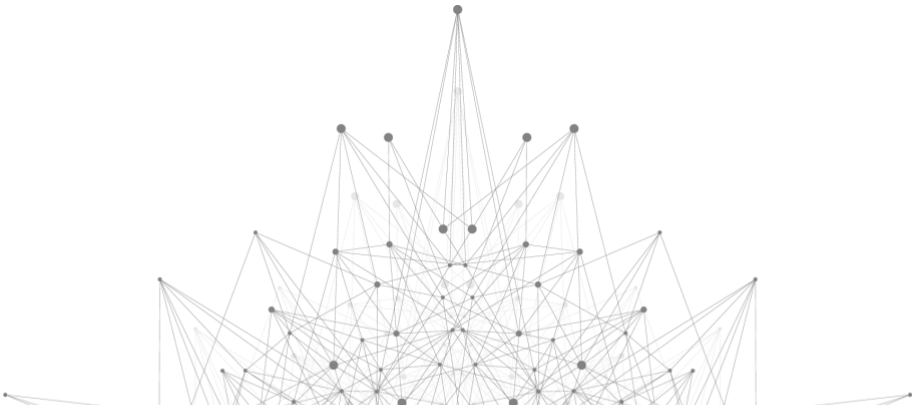
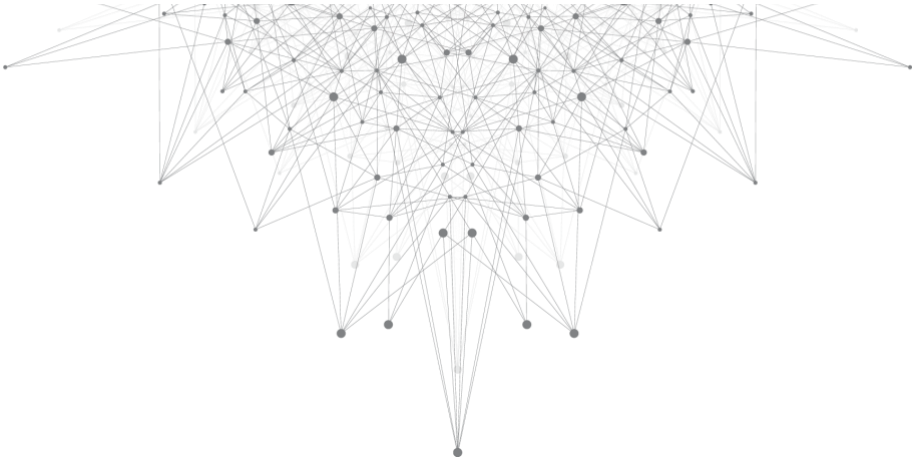


Social Entrepreneurship Observatory

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP OBSERVATORY
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About SEO

Social Entrepreneurship Observatory (SEO) is a Regional Resource Center, a platform for monitoring of and collaboration and partnership for the development and promotion of social entrepreneurship in South-East Europe. Our activities include research, training, consulting, editing and publishing, networking and coordination, and event organising.

SEO contributes to the development of the social enterprises in the region by offering direct technical and mentoring support, but also with their work towards the development of the SE ecosystem. Currently, we are focusing on young entrepreneurs focused on achieving social change.

It provides support in the form of resources, mentoring, networking, and other services to help social entrepreneurs develop their ideas and build sustainable businesses. The SEO also organises workshops, seminars, and other events to support and promote the development of social entrepreneurship in Skopje and the wider region.

What are the SEO projects and activities?

The SEO has a number of projects that it has been involved in since its establishment in 2020. These include:

1. Research into social entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans region.
2. Capacity-building activities for social entrepreneurs.
3. Training and offering professional advice to social entrepreneurs.
4. Developing a network of social entrepreneurs in South-Eastern Europe.
5. Facilitating access to finance for social entrepreneurs.
6. Developing a social entrepreneurship ecosystem in North Macedonia.
7. Organising public events and conferences to promote social entrepreneurship.
8. Connecting social entrepreneurs with mentors and investors.
9. Creating an online platform to promote social entrepreneurship.
10. Developing an international network of social entrepreneurs.

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Performance Highlights

The Social Entrepreneurship Observatory (SEO), in 2022, has been active in several areas, including:

1. **Research into social entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans region.**

We have started the data-gathering process through an online survey to investigate the Citizen's Perceptions of Social Entrepreneurship in North Macedonia. It is an open survey for the general public. The first version and investigation were conducted in 2020. This is the second time that SEO explores the perception and views of the citizens of social entrepreneurship, their purchasing experiences and practices, motivations and characterisation of social enterprises. The survey will be open by June 2023. The report is planned for July 2023.

We also have conducted a research project to provide short social entrepreneurship country profiles from the Western Balkan countries for the purpose of the Western Balkans Conference for Social Entrepreneurship (http://seconference.online/). More information about the conference are provided below.

2. **Capacity-building activities for social entrepreneurs.**

SEO's team has been involved in several programs to increase the capacity of social entrepreneurs. These activities comprised training, workshops, seminars, and other events in which SEO teams were trainers, speakers, mentors or promotors. Specifically, we have conducted lectures at the London Metropolitan University – Skopje branch and University American College Skopje and a short discussion at University Tor Vergata based in Rome. We were also present as mentors at the Social Entrepreneurship Challenge 2022, organised by Vrije Universiteit Brussel in Brussels.

3. **Developing a network of social entrepreneurs in South-Eastern Europe (SEE).**

This activity is continuous and a long-term goal of the SEO. We are growing our and the overall network of social entrepreneurs in the SEE region. We have partnered up with organisations from the region and signed memorandums of cooperation, RECOGNIZING the

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importance of social entrepreneurship for promoting the business environment and improving citizens' living standards and quality of life.

We have also started establishing a social entrepreneurship consortium in North Macedonia to facilitate the development of support mechanisms, including funding, capacity building, raising awareness and others.

4. **Developing a social entrepreneurship ecosystem in North Macedonia.**

SEO has been involved in the political process of designing and adopting the Strategy for the Support of Social Enterprises in North Macedonia as an advocate for social entrepreneurship ecosystem development and as a consultant in the strategy design and drafting.

5. **Organising public events and conferences to promote social entrepreneurship.**

In the first half of 2022, SEO organised a regional conference, the Western Balkans Conference for Social Entrepreneurship (http://seconference.online/). The conference's topic was The Challenges of Developing a Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem. More than 70 participants followed the conference, with more than ten speakers from the Western Balkan region. The public, private, civil and social entrepreneurship sectors were present at the conference. The Swedish Institute supported the conference. Our regional partners was the association of citizens HASTE from Tirana, Albania.

6. **Creating an online platform to promote social entrepreneurship.**

SEO has created several platforms over the years. In 2022, we have created the - https://seindex.org/ and http://seconference.online/ platforms. The first is for a tool that we are developing over the last few years - The Social Entrepreneurship Index (SEI). SEI is a measurement tool that evaluates the development of social entrepreneurship on a national level. SEI is focused on five crucial dimensions – the political, economic, legal, technical or institutional and financial dimensions. Currently, looking for funding to pilot the tool. The second platform was for the Western Balkans Conference for Social Entrepreneurship.

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7. **Developing an international network of social entrepreneurs.**

Last year, we put in additional efforts and focused on developing an international network of social entrepreneurs and organisations supporting social enterprises. We have signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Entrepreneurial Mindset Network - an international community of practice for the entrepreneurial mindset in 99 countries.

We had become founding partners of the SHINE Project, representing 21 organisations in 17 countries. The project encompasses eight EU countries (Austria, France, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Malta, Portugal and Spain), four Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia), three countries of the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland & Scotland), one African country (Tunisia), and one South American country (Ecuador).

We also connected with other international social entrepreneurship networks, such as EMES, DIESIS, EUCLID, ASHOKA and others.

Strategic Initiatives

1. Establish a project management office in Brussels: Establishing a project management office allows organisations to centralise project management processes and resources.

2. Develop a project portfolio management system: A project portfolio management system enables organisations to analyse and prioritise projects and allocate resources accordingly.

3. Implement change management: Change management helps ensure that projects are managed effectively, efficiently, and with minimal disruption.

4. Enhance communication and collaboration: Enhancing communication and collaboration among project stakeholders helps ensure that projects are successful.

5. Utilise technology: Utilizing the latest technology and tools helps organisations streamline processes and improve efficiency.

6. Train project managers: Training project managers on the latest project management processes and tools helps organisations remain competitive.

7. Implement agile methodology: Agile methodology allows organisations to adapt to changing circumstances and produce results quickly.

Planned Activities for 2023

1. Research:
    a. Investigate the Citizen's Perceptions of Social Entrepreneurship in North Macedonia;
    b. Investigate the social entrepreneurship ecosystem effects on social entrepreneurs;
    c. Investigate social entrepreneurship education curriculums.
2. Capacity-building:
    a. Revitalise the SEO social entrepreneurship courses;
    b. Conduct training for social entrepreneurs;
    c. Organise regional educational events.
3. Developing a network of social entrepreneurs in the SEE region:
    a. Continue to grow the SEO regional network;
    b. Propose regional partnerships and collaborations to current and new partners;
    c. Be involved in a regional project.
4. Developing a social entrepreneurship ecosystem in the SEE region:
    a. Monitor social entrepreneurship ecosystem in the SEE region;
    b. Contribute to the social entrepreneurship ecosystem development in the SEE region.
5. Organising public events and conferences to promote social entrepreneurship:
    a. Organise or be present as speakers to at least five webinars;
    b. Organise two educational events for social entrepreneurship.
6. Creating an online platform to promote social entrepreneurship:
    a. Continue developing the already established platforms;
    b. Investigate new ideas for the creation of SE tools;
    c. Digitalise processes.
7. Developing an international network of social entrepreneurs:
    a. Continue to grow the SEO international network;
    b. Propose international partnerships and collaborations to current and new partners;
    c. Be involved in an international project.

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Final Remarks

As we look ahead to the next year, we are optimistic that we will continue progressing towards our goals. We are proud of our accomplishments over the past year and thank everyone who has been a part of this journey. We are committed to providing exceptional service and creating lasting relationships with our stakeholders.

We are thankful for our staff and partners' dedication and hard work, who have made these successes possible.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to another successful year.

Executive Director



Stefan Chichevaliev