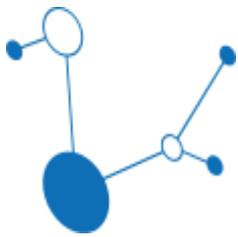


SOLUTION 2

Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship - Croatia

National Foundation for Civil Society Development & Split-Dalmatia County





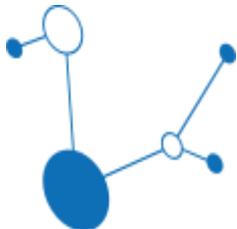
1. TERRITORIAL BACKGROUND

The Split-Dalmatia County in Croatia provides the initial terrain for this solution, and it exemplifies several **territorial challenges** that the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship is meant to address. Despite the presence of numerous social enterprises, cooperatives, and solidarity initiatives in the region, these actors often operate in **fragmentation and isolation**, with limited cooperation among each other or with local governments. This fragmentation means valuable knowledge and resources are not being shared, and opportunities for collaboration (for example, joint projects or shared services) are missed. There is also a **lack of organized support structures** for SSE organizations development – for instance, social enterprises struggle to find mentorship, training, or financial guidance tailored to their social mission. Local government authorities in some parts of the county have low awareness or understanding of SSE activities, and consequently, most of their support efforts favor traditional economic models over social enterprises. This gap in understanding leads to SSE initiatives not being fully integrated into local development plans or benefiting from local incentives.

Another challenge is the **disparity between urban centers and rural or less-developed areas**. Split-Dalmatia includes remote and less-developed local communities where the need for socially-oriented entrepreneurship is high. These areas often have more pronounced social needs (due to fewer public services and economic opportunities), which makes them fertile ground for SSE solutions. Paradoxically, while rural areas may have strong social capital and necessity driving community initiatives, they also face greater resource constraints and visibility issues. The Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship addresses this by aiming to network both urban and rural initiatives, ensuring that those in remote areas get access to support and markets.

Furthermore, **financial and policy barriers** persist in the SSE sector. Many social enterprises rely on a mix of funding sources (market income, government support, EU funds), but this often leaves them financially fragile and overly dependent on public or project-based funding. Locally, there have been limited tailored financial incentives (such as tax reliefs or social procurement preferences) to encourage the growth of SSE. This means social entrepreneurs operate in an ecosystem that does not yet fully recognize or reward their social impact. The challenge, therefore, is not only to support individual SSE organizations but also to **advocate for a more enabling environment**, including policy measures and public awareness that value the social economy.

In summary, the territorial challenges that this solution tackles are: (1) **Fragmentation of the SSE ecosystem** – the need for a unifying platform and network; (2) **Capacity gaps** – the need for building skills, knowledge, and supportive infrastructure for SSE actors; (3) **Weak public-private linkages** – the need for improved partnership between local authorities, businesses, and community initiatives; and (4) **Sustainability hurdles** – the need for strategies to achieve financial viability and policy support for SSE initiatives. Addressing these challenges in Split-Dalmatia is both urgent and illustrative: the lessons learned here should inform other regions facing similar issues, thereby validating the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship model as a response to common territorial challenges in developing the social and solidarity economy.



2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

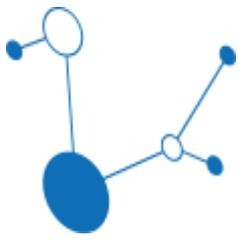
The policy objectives of the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship model are grounded in both **local priorities and the broader strategic framework** of the 3P4SSE project. At the highest level, this solution targets the policy area of **capacity building for the social economy**, which was identified as the most pressing need in Croatia's context. Strengthening skills, knowledge sharing, and competencies for social economy organizations is seen as a crucial step to enable them to face current challenges and drive deep societal transformations. In alignment with the *Joint Strategy on 3Ps to support Social and Solidarity Economy* developed at the international level, the solution focuses on the priority of “*supporting skills and competences, favoring knowledge sharing, and producing new knowledge for the ecosystem*”. In other words, the solution is policy-driven to create, share, and transfer knowledge that empowers social enterprises and their partners.

Locally, through stakeholder workshops and consultations, three overarching objectives were defined for this solution:

1. **Innovate Public-Private Collaboration:** *Improve the performance of local systems of cooperation between public authorities, private sector, and third-sector (non-profit) actors.* This involves experimenting with new forms of partnership and co-management of projects, thereby enhancing trust and efficiency in addressing community needs.
2. **Pilot and Replicate SSE Solutions:** *Enable the creation of pilot experiences whose successes can be definitively adopted in the local context and reproduced elsewhere.* Each pilot initiative supported by the Center is meant to serve as a demonstration project that, if successful, can be scaled up or adapted by other municipalities or regions.
3. **Generate Learnings for Policy Influence:** *Capture lessons and learning that can be transferred to other contexts and inform policy outcomes.* The Support Center is conceived as a learning hub – documenting effective approaches, stakeholder feedback, and impact data – so that these insights can feed into local and national policy-making. This corresponds to ensuring that the project's outcomes contribute to long-term strategic change.

These objectives reflect a commitment to **policy innovation**. By focusing on capacity-building and partnership, the solution directly supports the joint international strategy's call to “*endow social economy clusters with economic sustainability and resilience by promoting capacity building initiatives*”. Additionally, the emphasis on replication and knowledge transfer echoes the European vision of social innovation: integrating disadvantaged groups, introducing new services through digital and technological transformation, and scaling what works for broader impact .

Importantly, the political support for this solution is strong at the regional level. The Split-Dalmatia County government, as a partner of the project, has aligned its interest with the solution's aims, recognizing that a **resilient, inclusive SSE sector can advance community development goals** and complement public services. The solution thus serves a dual political purpose: it operationalizes an immediate pilot in the region and it lays groundwork for **policy change** – such as advocating for supportive legislation, funding schemes, or institutional recognition for SSE. In the long run, one political objective is to have the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship model integrated into public policy. This will ensure sustainability and signify a shift in governance toward the 3P model.



3. THE STRUCTURE OF LOCAL ACTION PLAN

Local Action Plan (LAP) is focused on the **policy area of capacity building**, as defined in the *Joint Strategy on 3Ps to Support Social and Solidarity Economy*. In this context, capacity building refers to empowering social-economy organisations with the **skills, competences, and knowledge** necessary to address emerging challenges and drive transformative change. The policy area emphasises the **creation, sharing, and transfer of knowledge** to build a supportive environment that strengthens the entire social-economy ecosystem.

In line with these principles, the LAP addresses three key policy priorities:

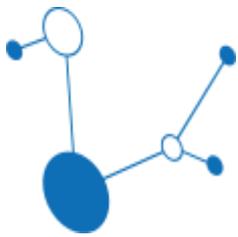
- (a) supporting the development of skills and competences;
- (b) promoting the sharing of existing knowledge; and
- (c) generating new knowledge for the ecosystem.

Given the current situation in **Split-Dalmatia County**, where many social and solidarity economy (SSE) initiatives exist but often operate in isolation, the LAP focuses on the **first two priorities**—building competences and facilitating knowledge exchange. Local SSE actors frequently face limited coordination with local governments, insufficient support for organisational growth, and a lack of networking and visibility. Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative structure that connects public, private, and civil-society actors.

Through consultations and workshops held with key stakeholders as part of the 3P4SSE project, several guiding goals for the LAP were defined:

1. **Promote an inclusive economic model** through effective public-private partnership (3P) rooted in local needs and capacities.
2. **Develop a scalable model** that can be adapted and replicated in other regions of Croatia.
3. **Maintain a dynamic mapping process** of social and solidarity initiatives to ensure updated data and visibility of actors.
4. **Create an online knowledge and collaboration network** linking social entrepreneurs, CSOs, Local Action Groups, and local authorities. The network will be coordinated through a shared (“circulating”) governance model connecting committed organisations, complemented by a physical coordination point for meetings and operational activities.
5. **Increase the visibility** of SSE initiatives and their products and services through joint communication and awareness-raising campaigns.

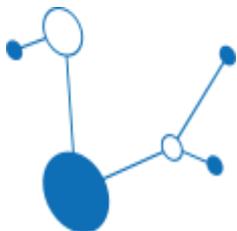
A strong emphasis is also placed on ensuring **economic, social, and environmental sustainability**, which remains a long-term challenge and a guiding principle for all activities. During the second regional workshop, where local stakeholders and public administrators jointly discussed priorities, the **establishment of Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship**—with a strong focus on 3P partnerships—was identified as the most urgent and strategic step forward. This initiative emerged



from the shared recognition of the need for a **comprehensive ecosystem** that supports the growth, coordination, and resilience of the social and solidarity economy.

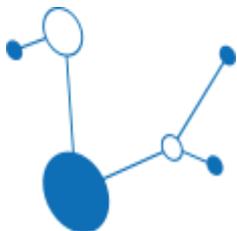
Accordingly, the LAP aims to establish a **Support Center and accompanying digital platform** capable of guiding, connecting, and scaling social-economy initiatives across the region. The Center will serve as a coordination and learning hub for pilot projects, ensuring that successful approaches are replicated elsewhere.

The model draws inspiration from existing network-based initiatives such as the *Green Phone Network*, which connects organisations through an informal yet effective structure dedicated to public engagement and environmental protection. Similarly, the Support Center for SSE will function as a **hybrid (physical and digital) network**, enabling collaboration, shared learning, and collective impact across sectors and territories.



4. TERRITORIAL STAKEHOLDERS

Name	Type of Organisation	Level of engagement	Comment
Split-Dalmatia County	Regional Public Authority	Beneficiary, involved in planning and pilot implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - active participation in all activities - presentation of the pilot outcomes - dissemination activities - media relations
Local Action Group Škoji, Association of Croatian Veterans Treated for PTSD of Split-Dalmatia County, Veterans Social Work Cooperative Dalmatia Ruralis, Association of Olive Growers Kaštela "Mastrinka", Center for Rural Development CERURA HR, Chefs of Kitchens of Mediterranean and European Regions (ŠKMER), Leader network of Croatia, MoSt Association, Healthy City Association, Domine Association	Cooperatives, social enterprises, NGO's	Beneficiary, involved in planning and pilot implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participatory workshops - contribution to data repository - member of the network
Održivo d.o.o. (Sustainable) - a company for construction, architectural design and spatial planning	SME	Beneficiary, involved in planning and pilot implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participatory workshops - contribution to data repository - member of the network
Dugopolje Municipality Development Agency "ODRAZ"	Business support organisation	Informed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - invited to the public events
Population of the Split-Dalmatia County	General Public	Beneficiary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - participation at public events



5. SOLUTION

5.1. INTRODUCTION TO THE SOLUTION

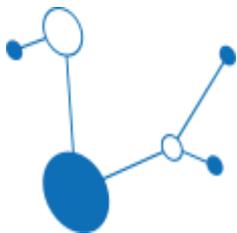
The **Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship** in Croatia is a place-based solution designed to strengthen the SSE ecosystem through collaborative public-private partnerships (the **3P** governance model). This model envisions both a physical center and a digital platform – where local and regional governments, civil society organisations (associations, foundations), cooperatives, SMEs operating on social-economy principles and business-support organisations, can co-create and implement activities that respond to community needs.

By integrating training programmes, knowledge exchange networks, pilot projects, and a digital SSE platform, the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship model serves as an **practical instrument for capacity-building, partnership development, and social innovation** in the Split-Dalmatia region and beyond. The model emphasizes **transferability and local ownership**, meaning it can be replicated in other territories while engaging stakeholders to take joint ownership of outcomes.

General flexibility, participatory design, and embedded learning process of the Solution make it scalable, adaptable, and ready for transfer to other European territories interested in applying this approach, in order to enhance social innovation and achieve regional cohesion, but also to be adapted and replicated in other regions of Croatia.

In a projective mode, the development of the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship is envisioned in two horizons – a mid-term consolidation and a long-term evolution

- **Mid-Term Consolidation:** Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship is expected to become a recognized coordination point nationally for SSE actors. It will operate as a **fully functional hybrid hub**, combining a digital platform with on-site support services for social entrepreneurs, local governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), and other SSE ecosystem stakeholders. By this stage, the Center will have delivered proven capacity-building tools (workshops, mentoring, a knowledge base) and facilitated **2–3 successful public-private pilot partnerships** that serve as scalable case studies. A publicly accessible online platform will be in place, showcasing SSE products and services and fostering collaboration among different stakeholders. The Center will function through a **core coordination team plus decentralized regional contributions**, and it aims to achieve partial self-sustainability via service revenues, strategic partnerships, or public tenders.
- **Long-Term Evolution:** The Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship is envisioned as the **main national mechanism** driving systemic development of the social economy in Croatia, aligned with broader EU efforts. It will be institutionally recognized and integrated into national strategic frameworks, maintaining an **adaptive digital infrastructure** serving hundreds of users and initiatives. Its services will include structured support for scaling social enterprises (e.g. facilitating access to public procurement, corporate social responsibility channels, and financing opportunities) and acting as a node for research and innovation to inform policy. The Center will likely be part of a **regional alliance of SSE support hubs** in Southeast Europe, ensuring cross-border knowledge exchange. Financially, it should be sustainable through a diversified model (combining service fees, memberships,



partnerships, national and EU funding instruments). By fostering **inclusive local economies rooted in solidarity, social justice, and green transition**, the solution will contribute to long-term social impact and policy innovation in the region.

Scope and Main Features

The Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship model addresses both the **capacity-building needs** of SSE stakeholders and the **coordination gaps** in the current ecosystem.

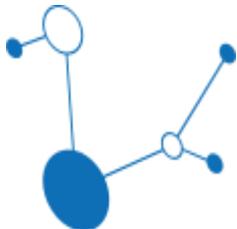
Its scope includes: (a) providing training, mentoring, and knowledge resources to social entrepreneurs; (b) establishing a continuous networking and co-creation platform for public, private, and third-sector stakeholders; and (c) coordinating pilot projects that exemplify effective Public-Private Partnerships (the “3P” model) in practice. The model will feature an online knowledge-sharing platform (with resources like guides, FAQs, funding opportunities), a showcase marketplace for SSE products/services, a help-desk or support service for new initiatives, and on-the-ground facilitation of partnerships. By combining a physical Center (for face-to-face meetings, workshops, and coordination) with a digital hub, the model ensures both local presence and broader reach. This dual approach is innovative in that it mirrors successful network models but tailors them to SSE needs, creating an informal yet structured network of support.

Innovative Elements

Several elements make his solution particularly innovative in the context of Croatia’s SSE development. First, it pioneers a **3P place-based governance model**, meaning that governance is shared among public authorities, social businesses and civil society organisation as well other ecosystem stakeholders in a given locality. This approach goes beyond traditional public-private partnerships by actively involving community actors in decision-making and resource sharing. Second, the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship acts as a **platform and catalyst** rather than a conventional institution – it facilitates connections and resources across existing organizations, thus *networking the network*. The inclusion of a comprehensive **digital platform** for SSE is also novel, bringing technological support (e.g. a centralized SSE portal) to what has traditionally been a fragmented sector. Additionally, the models envisions **impact measurement from the start**, designing tools and indicators to monitor social impact and outcomes of SSE initiatives, which will foster a culture of evidence-based learning and improvement. Finally, the phased approach of developing this solution has allowed for continuous **co-creation with stakeholders**, ensuring the model is grounded in local context and can adapt based on lessons learned – a key innovative practice in policy design.

Transferability, Replicability and Ownership

The Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship model is explicitly designed to be **transferable and scalable**. One of the core objectives is to create a model that can be adapted, expanded or replicated in other parts of Croatia and even other regions in Europe. Critical elements for replicability include the modular digital platform (which can be expanded to new regions), the governance framework (a template for setting up 3P partnerships and support networks), and the training/mentoring curricula developed. To support this, the solution will produce **open guidelines and tools** (such as how-to guides for establishing local SSE support networks, templates for stakeholder mapping and engagement, etc.), making it easier for others to adopt.



Equally important is the aspect of **local ownership**. In the Croatian pilot, a broad range of local stakeholders have been involved from the beginning which builds buy-in and ensures that the model is truly rooted in the community. This participatory foundation helps in transferring the model because it demonstrates the importance of engaging local actors in design and governance. Each new locality that adopts this solution would establish its own stakeholder coalition to take ownership. The “**shared coordination**” scheme (shared leadership within the network of organizations) is another mechanism to promote collective ownership and sustainability. By embedding the solution’s governance in local partnerships and ensuring that benefits (skills, knowledge, visibility) are shared, the model encourages any adopting community to customize and *own* the initiative. This way, the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship can have a strong policy impact: not only does it directly support SSE enterprises, it also models a new form of governance and partnership that can influence how local development projects are conceived and implemented across the region.

5.2. GOVERNANCE MODEL

The Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship operates on a **3P place-based governance model**, meaning it is governed and guided by a partnership of public sector, private sector actors that are working in the field of the SSE as well other stakeholders in the ecosystem.

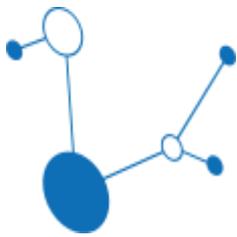
A steering group or coordination committee oversees the Center, with representation from the county (public authority), social enterprises, NGOs and possibly supportive private entities or academia. This collaborative governance will ensure that decisions reflect the needs and insights of all sectors, increasing the relevance and buy-in of actions. It also institutionalizes the **public-private partnership approach**: for instance, any pilot project undertaken through the Center pairs public and private actors (including “third-sector” organisation) in design and execution. Through this model, the solution introduces a **governance innovation** – local problems are addressed by local coalitions, supported by the framework and resources of the Center. This approach is inherently scalable and replicable, as it could be adopted by any region seeking to formalize 3P collaboration for social economy initiatives.

5.3. PHASED DEVELOPMENT, LESSONS LEARNED AND OUTCOMES

The development of the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship followed a **four-phase process** that represents both the chronological path of the pilot and the **methodological roadmap** for establishing similar centres elsewhere. Each phase contains practical steps, tested tools, and lessons learned that can be directly transferred to other territories aiming to build a 3P-based governance structure for SSE.

Phase 1 - Analysis and Mapping of Local Governments and SSE Actors

Objective: To analyse the existing landscape of social and solidarity economy initiatives and to understand how local governments and other stakeholders have previously engaged in public-private partnerships.



Approach and Key Actions

- Desk research and survey collection on local governments, identifying their experience with SSE and existing support measures.
- Workshops with local authorities, NGOs, cooperatives, and social enterprises as well other SSE regional stakeholders to exchange practices and identify common gaps.
- Territorial and thematic grouping of existing initiatives to visualise where SSE activity is most concentrated.

Lessons Learned: The analysis confirmed that a significant number of social-economy initiatives are not formally registered or easily identifiable through public databases. Therefore, traditional desk research proved insufficient to capture the true scope of SSE activity. A **snowball mapping method**—where known actors help identify additional ones—proved far more effective for reaching smaller, informal or emerging initiatives. This participatory approach produced a more complete picture of the ecosystem.

Outcome: This phase generated the first evidence base for decision-making and a participatory mapping methodology that any other region can reuse to understand its own SSE ecosystem before planning interventions.

Phase 2 - Regional Support Plan Development

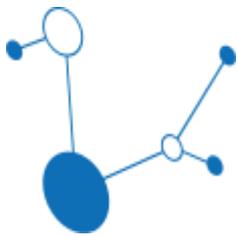
Objective: To co-design a territorial Support Plan for SSE development grounded in the analysis from Phase 1 and aligned with policy goals of capacity building, resource sharing, and maximising social impact.

Approach and Key Actions

- Co-creation workshops with representatives of public authorities, CSOs, cooperatives, and SMEs and other SSE ecosystem stakeholders.
- Drafting of guidelines and strategic priorities for regional SSE support based on stakeholder input.
- Agreement on policy areas where 3P collaboration is most needed (capacity building, knowledge transfer, and joint initiatives).

Lessons Learned: The co-creation process highlighted that developing a shared Support Plan requires balancing very different perspectives—public administrations often focus on procedural aspects, while civil-society and business actors emphasise practical challenges and opportunities. Organising several thematic workshops rather than a single consultation should be essential to reach consensus and ensure that each stakeholder group could contribute meaningfully. This iterative approach could foster mutual understanding, clarified expectations, and strengthened collective ownership of the final plan.

Outcome: A consensus-based plan that demonstrates how participatory planning can translate research findings into shared regional priorities.



Phase 3 - Establishment of the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship

Objective: To set up the Support Center that enables cooperation, training, and visibility for SSE actors.

Approach and Key Actions:

- Definition of the Center’s governance and location within existing structures.
- Launch of initial training and mentoring programmes for social entrepreneurs.
- Design of a sustainability model combining membership fees, paid services, CSR partnerships, and public tenders.
- Development of a digital platform prototype for networking, knowledge sharing, and showcasing SSE products and services.
- Public visibility campaign and creation of an online and offline network connecting CSOs, LAGs, local governments, and SMEs.
- Introduction of impact-measurement indicators and tools to monitor performance.

Lessons Learned: The carried out activities showed that the scope of planned interventions had been overly ambitious within a short timeframe so they should consolidated and refined them into a more realistic, modular design—embedding continuous mentoring, feedback loops, and phased rollout of the digital platform, impact-measurement and visibility campaign. This adaptive process is now part of the methodology itself. At the same time, the **“shared governance” scheme proved to be challenging in the initial phase of constituting the Support Center** - particularly before the Center implement concrete activities and establishes its operational rhythm.

Outcome: A tested model for creating a hybrid (physical-digital) SSE support hub governed through 3P partnership principles, easily adaptable to other regions.

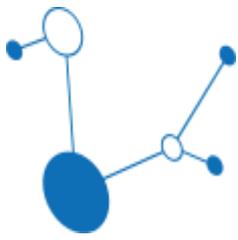
Phase 4 - Pilot Implementation and Validation

Objective: To test and validate the Support Center model through practical pilot initiatives demonstrating 3P cooperation and social impact.

Approach and Key Actions:

- Selection of 2–3 pilot initiatives through transparent criteria prioritising high-impact areas such as green services, short supply chains, or inclusion.
- Individual consultations with each pilot actor to co-design implementation workplans.
- Provision of expert support—legal, business-planning, and evaluation advice—by the Support Center’s coordination team.
- Monitoring and evaluation of pilots using defined KPIs and stakeholder feedback templates.
- Documentation of each pilot as a case study to inform policy advocacy and replication.

Lessons Learned: The preparatory phase for pilot implementation showed that aligning multiple actors within the 3P framework requires stronger institutional anchoring and coordination time. Ensuring that the Support Center’s governance, digital platform, and mentoring functions are fully operational before launching pilot actions proved essential for long-term ownership and impact and should be considered as prerequisite.



Outcome: Demonstrated proof-of-concept of the Support Center’s facilitative role. Each pilot will provide an example of how local coalitions can jointly address community needs under a 3P framework, offering transferable templates and lessons for other territories.

5.4. SUPPORT CENTER CORE ACTIVITIES

In its fully operational form, the Support Center will have multiple activities aimed at strengthening the SSE ecosystem in specific region:

5.4.1. Capacity Building and Training

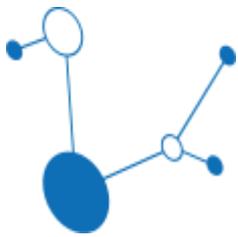
The Center model offers regular training workshops, mentoring programs, and peer-learning sessions for social entrepreneurs and organizations that aspire to transform into one. Topics might range from social business model development, fundraising and accessing public funding, impact measurement, to public-private partnership skills. By equipping SSE actors with knowledge and skills, the Center will directly address the capacity gaps. The training cycle should be designed in a co-learning spirit – leveraging local expertise (successful social entrepreneurs, knowledgeable civil servants, etc.) as mentors – thus fostering a community of practice. Mentorship should be individualized where possible, and feedback loops are set up to continuously improve the curriculum. Over time, this capacity-building function will create a pool of skilled social innovators and sensitized public officials who can drive SSE projects independently, multiplying the impact.

5.4.2. Networking and Changemaker Engagement

A foundational activity of the solution is **mapping the SSE changemakers and stakeholders** in the territory. From the beginning, the Center should conduct a “changemaker mapping” to identify key actors – social enterprises, cooperative initiatives, active NGOs, municipality programs, etc. – and assesses their interests and influence. This information should be used to build and update a **power-interest matrix** and network map that visualizes the ecosystem. The Support Center then actively engages these stakeholders through networking events and thematic working groups. By doing so, it breaks the isolation of individual initiatives and creates channels for collaboration and co-creation. For example, a local farmers’ cooperative might connect via the Center with a municipal social services department to co-develop a food security project. The networking function also feeds into the digital platform by providing content (profiles of SSEs, partnership opportunities) and by growing the user base. Essentially, the Support Center “**institutionalizes**” a **regional SSE network**, making previously informal or sporadic connections more structured and continuous.

5.4.3. Digital Platform for SSE

A major innovative element of the solution is the creation of a dedicated **digital platform** for Social and Solidarity Economy actors. This online platform could act as a **virtual hub and marketplace** that will include a knowledge base (FAQs, guides, case studies, information on funding opportunities) to help new and existing social enterprises navigate resources. It should also provide functionalities for SSE organizations to **showcase their products and services** – effectively an online catalogue or marketplace where, say, a social enterprise can promote its handicrafts or a care cooperative can list its services. Additionally, the platform could host the **interactive network**: profiles of stakeholders, a discussion forum or collaboration space, and possibly tools for



match-making partnerships. This digital dimension extends the reach of the Support Center beyond physical events, enabling continuous interaction and support. It was decided during the plan's development that an online network is critical to complement the physical center, especially to include those who cannot attend in-person meetings (for reasons of geography, time or finance). The platform should take into account user-friendliness and accessibility in mind – complying with data protection (GDPR) and web accessibility standards (WCAG) – to ensure it is inclusive. A **beta version** of the platform will be should be launched for initial user feedback, after which it will be refined and expanded. In the long run, this platform could become a one-stop-shop for SSE in a region.

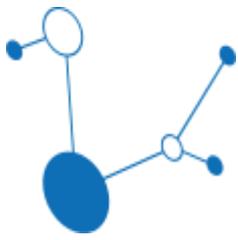
5.4.4. Pilot Project Facilitation

The Support Center should actively **coordinate pilot projects** that exemplify the 3P partnership approach. Rather than implementing projects itself, the Center plays an enabling role – identifying promising project ideas, matching partners, assisting in planning, and monitoring progress. The model envisions selection of **2–3 targeted pilot initiatives** in areas where early social impact is likely, such as green services, short supply chains, or social inclusion projects. The Center establishes **selection criteria** to choose these pilots and then works with the chosen social enterprises and their public/private partners to co-develop implementation workplans. Throughout implementation, the Center provides or sources **expert support** (e.g., legal advice for partnership agreements, business planning expertise, evaluation methods) to ensure pilots succeed. This component of the solution not only results in tangible projects improving communities, but also generates success stories and learnings. Each pilot should be documented as a case study, showing how the partnership was formed, what challenges were encountered, and what outcomes achieved. These case studies become powerful tools for advocacy and replication – they demonstrate to other municipalities or regions what can be achieved through a 3P-supported SSE initiative (for example, a municipality seeing the result might adopt a similar approach in their locale). The pilot projects thus function as **proof-of-concept for the Support Center model**, helping to refine the model and building credibility among stakeholders and funders.

5.4.5. Visibility and Advocacy

To address the low visibility of SSE initiatives, the Support Center should have a dedicated **visibility and strategic communication** role. This involves crafting a clear narrative and identity for the SSE movement in the region – for instance, developing a simple, compelling **visual identity and message toolkit** that all involved organizations can use to promote the initiative. The Center should coordinate joint communication campaigns via social media, press releases, and public events, shining a spotlight on social innovators and their contributions. A planned series of events might include SSE fairs, open days at social enterprises, or conferences on social innovation, often in collaboration with media to amplify reach. By featuring success stories of **changemakers and pilot projects** in media and public forums, the Center helps shift public perception, showing that social entrepreneurship is a viable and valuable part of the economy.

On the advocacy side, the Support Center should engage with policy-makers at local and national levels, sharing policy briefs or recommendations drawn from the pilots and research. The goal is to create a more supportive policy environment – for example, the Center might advocate for local government to adopt social procurement policies or for national authorities to introduce tax incentives for SSE. Over time, the Center itself may become institutionalized as part of regional development structures, but even in the short term its advocacy ensures SSE is on the policy



agenda. Enhanced visibility and strategic communication not only attract public support but also could help in resource mobilization (e.g., drawing interest from impact investors or donors by raising the profile of SSE activities).

5.4.6. Sustainability Model and Financing

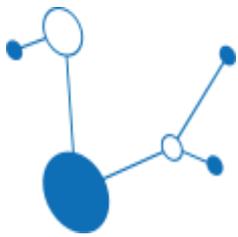
Recognizing that donor or project funding is time-limited, the model suggests development of a **self-sustainability model** for the Support Center. Early in the implementation, the Center should explore various financing options such as membership fees, paid services (e.g., consulting or training offered to municipalities or companies), partnerships with corporations (CSR funding), or competing for public tenders and EU projects. Consultations with key partners (local authorities, foundations, private sector) are held to gauge which revenue mechanisms are feasible and acceptable. The Center may pilot test one or two such mechanisms during the initial phase. The intent is to ensure the Center can continue operations beyond the initial funded phase, not relying solely on grants. This sustainability planning is part of the solution's design as a **long-term instrument** rather than a one-off project. A related aspect is human resource sustainability: the solution envisions a lean core team for the Center supplemented by contributions from partner. This distributed approach means the Center's knowledge and responsibilities are shared, reducing risk if specific funding ends. Ultimately, by the end of the initial period, a clear business plan for the Support Center should be in place, outlining how it will be financed and governed in the next 5+ years.

5.4.7. Impact Measurement and Learning

Lastly, the solution incorporates an **impact measurement framework** to continually evaluate and improve the Support Center's activities. Early on, a set of 5–7 key performance indicators (KPIs) should be defined in collaboration with stakeholders. These might include metrics like the **number of social enterprises supported, partnerships formed, trainings delivered, jobs created or people employed in SSE through the pilots, increase in SSE-related funding accessed**, or qualitative indicators like stakeholder satisfaction. The Center should integrate these indicators into regular reports and review meetings. For each training or pilot, feedback is collected using prepared templates and surveys to capture outcomes and participant experiences. This results-focused approach ensures that the solution remains accountable and results are transparent. Importantly, it also turns the Support Center into a knowledge generator: by analyzing what works and what doesn't, the Center can refine its services (for example, adjust the training topics based on feedback, or modify the platform features based on user analytics). Over time, the data and insights gathered should be shared with wider audiences – contributing to research on SSE development and informing policymakers. In the long-term vision, the Support Center is expected to function as a **research and innovation node** for SSE, meaning it will systematically gather data to inform policy and drive innovation in the sector. Establishing that practice from the start ensures that as the solution scales, it remains effective and evidence-based.

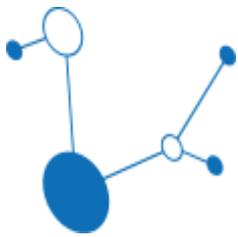
5.4.8. Transferability of Support Center Activities

The combination of the above components – governance model, support services, digital platform, pilot facilitation, communications, sustainability planning, and impact measurement – makes the Support Center a **holistic tool** for SSE promotion that can be adopted elsewhere. The solution is packaged in a way that others can take the core framework and adapt it to their local context. For instance, a region looking to replicate this could use the stakeholder mapping methodology, adapt



the digital platform, and follow the curated training program, while aligning pilots with their own local priorities. Because the solution was developed in a **participatory, phased manner**, it offers a roadmap (analysis → planning → establishment → implementation) that other territories can follow, adjusting the pace and scale as needed.

This Solution, when fully applied, offers a practical and replicable approach that other regions can adapt to their own contexts. The aim of this solution is to provide a practical roadmap for regions/territories seeking to establish or enhance collaboration among SSE actors, public authorities, private sector representatives, and local communities. It demonstrates how multi-stakeholder governance structures can be designed and implemented to improve coordination, visibility, and policy integration of the SSE sector.



6. THE SUMMARY OF SOLUTION 2

Given the current situation in **Split-Dalmatia County**, a Croatian region where many SSE initiatives exist, but often operate in isolation from one another, the Solution (*Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship*) focuses on the **two priorities**—building competences and facilitating knowledge exchange. Local SSE actors frequently face limited coordination with local governments, insufficient support for organisational growth, and a lack of networking and visibility. Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative structure that connects public, private, and civil-society actors.

The presented Solution envisions both a **physical center** and a **digital platform** – where local and regional governments, civil society organisations (associations, foundations), cooperatives, SMEs operating on social-economy principles and business-support organisations, can co-create and implement activities that respond to community needs, whereas the phased approach of developing this solution has allowed for continuous **co-creation with stakeholders**, ensuring the model is grounded in local context and can adapt based on lessons learned – a **key innovative practice** in policy design.

Also, by integrating training programmes, knowledge exchange networks, pilot projects, and a digital SSE platform, the Support Center for Social Entrepreneurship serves as a **practical instrument for capacity-building, partnership development, and social innovation** in the Split-Dalmatia region and beyond. The model emphasizes **transferability and local ownership**, meaning it can be replicated in other territories while engaging stakeholders to take joint ownership of outcomes.

The preparatory phase of implementation showed that aligning multiple actors within the 3P framework requires stronger institutional anchoring and coordination time. Ensuring that the Support Center's governance, digital platform, and mentoring functions are fully operational before launching pilot actions proved essential for long-term ownership and impact and should be considered as prerequisite. Therefore, in its fully operational form, the Support Center will have multiple activities aimed at strengthening the SSE ecosystem in specific region. In the long-term vision, the Support Center is expected to function as a **research and innovation node** for SSE, meaning it will systematically gather data to inform policy and drive innovation in the sector. Establishing that practice from the start ensures that as the solution scales, it remains effective and evidence-based.