

# THE POWER OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN CONFISCATED ASSETS

## ETS

The Power of Social Enterprises  
in Confiscated Assets – Toolkit



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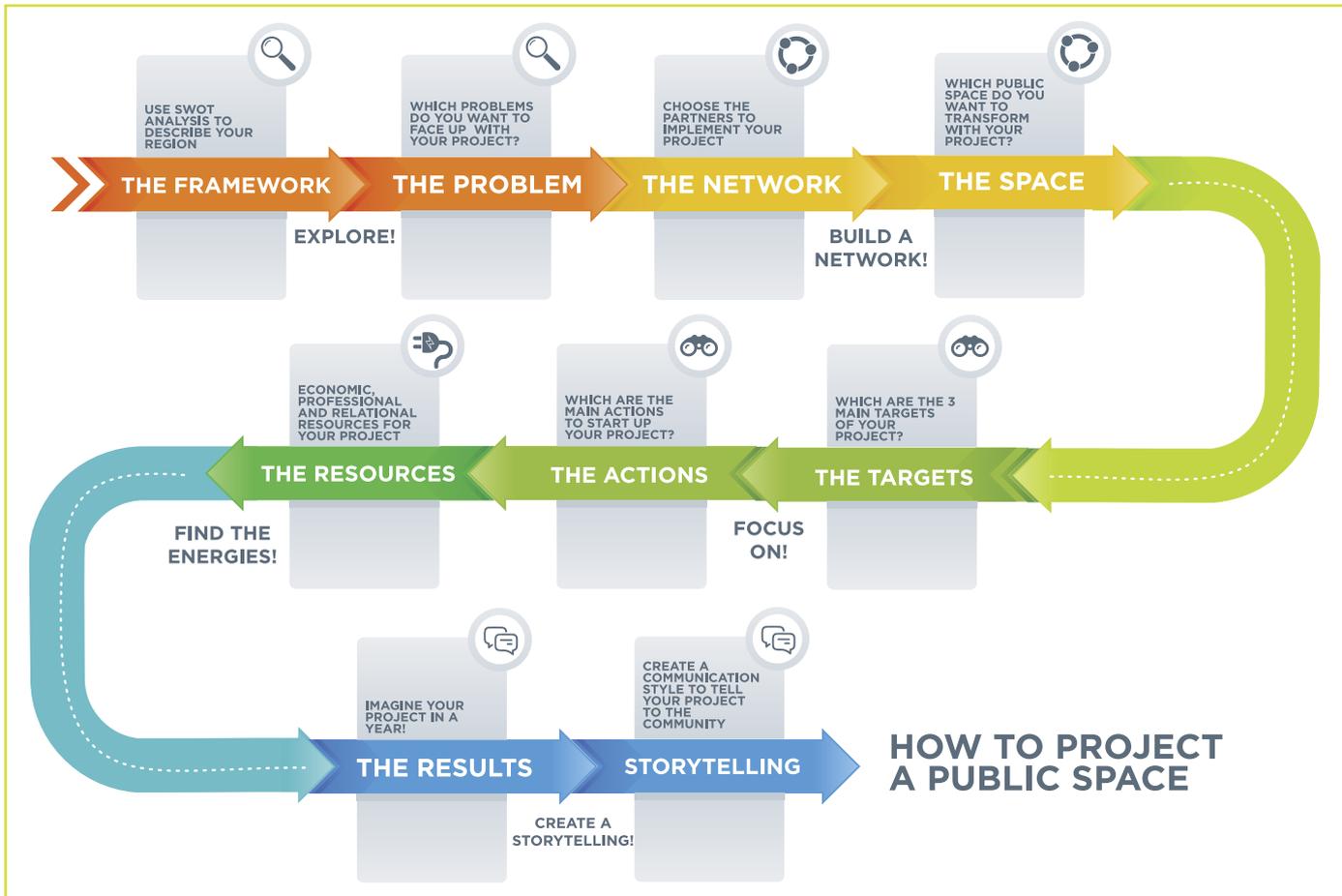
# 1. Policy Framework

Throughout this toolkit, different European laws and initiatives focus on regulating the asset confiscation process among the EU countries; their social reuse will be mentioned.

We therefore consider it pertinent to start by gathering them together, explaining them briefly and summarising them, for those organisations that wish to delve deeper into current legislation, with a view to developing projects focused on confiscated assets' social reuse.

At the **EU level**, the first recommendations that attempt to set a base for the regulation of the asset confiscation and transnational collaboration process are presented in **Framework Decision 2006/960/JHA**<sup>1</sup>, **Council Decision 2007/845/JHA**<sup>2</sup> and in the **Stockholm Programme 2010**.<sup>3</sup> These are followed by the resolution of 25 October 2011<sup>4</sup> on organised crime, which already gives more precise definitions of the desired direction. This process would finally lead to the adoption of **Directive 2014/42/EU**.<sup>5</sup> This Directive is currently being revised and is expected to be updated in the next few months.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the text, it is emphasised that the cross-border organised crime's main objective is financial gain. The Directive's innovation is to explicitly recommend that institutions advocate for the social/public interest reuse of confiscated assets. To this end, it is suggested that the authorities be provided with the necessary material/legal instruments to be able to develop their work in line with these guidelines. Subsequently, Regulation 2018/1805 for mutual recognition<sup>7</sup> was enacted to deepen state-to-state cooperation on asset forfeiture in the fight against cross-border crime. It is worth mentioning the establishment in 2007 of the ARO – EU Asset Recovery Office, a platform which, in 2012, invited and encouraged member states to create their own asset management agencies. ■



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## 2. European Programmes on Youth

The different data analysed in Chapter 5 of the Workbook, highlight the importance of working on the needs of young people, with a strong emphasis on their social inclusion and improvement of their working and living conditions.

When it comes to the strategies, programmes and initiatives conducted by European institutions focused on these problems, several are worth mentioning. On the Council Resolution of 26 November 2018<sup>1</sup>, the EU Youth Strategy, the new EU youth policy cooperation for 2019–2027, was established for cooperation with the objectives of providing better and more equal opportunities to the EU youth when it comes to education and job market, while encouraging them to become more actively involved in their societies. In this sense, an improvement in youth social and civic engagement was set as one of the priorities and, with this objective, plans were developed to facilitate and boost their social participation.

These aforementioned objectives were devised with a dual approach:

- On one side, one of the areas selected to be prioritised and boosted is that of non-formal education aimed at the EU youth and their needs. This is done through implementation and development of volunteering activities, youth work, intercultural exchanges, international mobility, and other initiatives included in EU's programmes.
- Other transversal and more 'mainstreaming' initiatives are aimed at ensuring that youth and their issues are heard by policymakers who are in charge of developing and evaluating policies and actions in other fields which, however, have a deep impact on EU youth's living conditions.

The EU Youth Strategy has structured its priorities into eight different strategies, one of them being 'employment and entrepreneurship'. With these aims the EU institutions and its members are making joint efforts focused on:

- Addressing the EU youth's needs and problems through employment strategies.
- Making wise investment with an emphasis in the abilities that are mostly demanded by the working market.
- Working in the development of services focused on the career guidance and counselling.
- Expanding and making better promotion of the different opportunities offered to work and train abroad.
- Dedicating resource to the support of quality internships/apprenticeships, which have proved to be effective.

- Improving childcare and shared family responsibilities.
- Encouraging youth entrepreneurship.

Youth employment is promoted within the context of Europe 2020 growth and jobs strategy<sup>2</sup>, with the following key actions:

- ‘Quality Employment for All’ is one of the goals set in the European Youth Goals.
- Following the Council Recommendation of April 2013, all the under-25 EU youth population should be provided with good-quality and decent work offers, the opportunity to keep on training and educating themselves, and the chance of developing an apprenticeship or traineeship period for four months.<sup>3</sup>
- Added to this, we have the 2016<sup>4</sup> the European Commission communication where it was proposed to give proper support to the EU youth and provide them with better opportunities when it comes to employment access. This is proposed to be done through education and training, and always aiming at solidarity.
- As already mentioned in the workbook, the European Solidarity Corps is the EU programme created for providing opportunities to the EU youth to experience a volunteering period, in their country or abroad, giving them the chance of working in projects focused on solidarity and which bring positive impact to different communities around the whole EU and the individuals living in them.
- A Quality Framework for Traineeship<sup>5</sup> is created to suggest guidelines for traineeships outside formal education.
- The European Alliance for Apprenticeships<sup>6</sup> has the objective of reducing the barriers and obstacles that discourage young people’s mobility.

Furthermore, boosting youth entrepreneurship is also one of the priorities on the EU political agenda. It is considered a priceless instrument to support the jobless youth population, and has been proved effective when working on social inclusion. At the same time, it has a great potential for stimulating innovation among the EU youth:

- The European Youth Goals has one of its eleven fields of action on employment, with special attention to entrepreneurship.
- The Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning<sup>7</sup> include entrepreneurship as a key competence.
- The European Union Youth Strategy 2019–2027 includes entrepreneurship

among its fields of action.

- The value of youth entrepreneurship was underlined in the Council Conclusions in 2014.<sup>8</sup> This document gives particular attention to an important aspect, social entrepreneurship, which tries to give a social value to entrepreneurial actions.
- The need for a strong focus on entrepreneurship was also underlined by the Expert Group Report ‘Developing the creative and innovative potential of young people through non-formal learning in ways that are relevant to employability’ published in 2014.<sup>9</sup>
- The results of the study ‘Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union’<sup>10</sup> show that youth work can have a deep impact when working in youth entrepreneurship. The development of intersectional and transversal abilities through different methodologies can boost youth’s creativity, which can have positive effects in this area.

When speaking about the different initiatives implemented by European institutions to boost youth inclusion, it is also important to underline the selection of 2022 as the European Year of Youth. During this year, four goals will be pursued:

- Giving renewed positive perspective for EU youth. The COVID-19 pandemic’s harmful effects have been noticed, as well as the need to give the young population reasons to feel positive. In this regard, direct interaction with the youth has been proposed to stress the positive aspects brought by the EU. An example is the green transition and the different opportunities that it offers for them.
- Boosting young people’s employment, especially for those coming from vulnerable contexts, with fewer opportunities, or, in general, with disadvantages. The idea is to promote their social inclusion with the aim of encouraging them to become active and engaged EU citizens.
- Promoting and giving more visibility to the different opportunities offered by the EU and national, regional or local institutions, and helping them to reach a better understanding of all the possibilities available.
- Making youth’s needs heard by policymakers in the different fields, in line with the EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027.

A noteworthy initiative conducted was the European Year of Youth (EYY) online survey, which received almost 5,000 responses<sup>11</sup> from 18–24-year-old EU young people. Amongst other things, the respondents showed an interest in volunteering activities and more Erasmus+ scholarships for rural areas. The following themes of the Year were preferred: ‘Education and training’ (63.6%), ‘Climate change/environment’ (59.8%), ‘Inclusive societies, including gender, anti-discrimination’ (48.12%).

The kind of activities that respondents believed should absolutely be part of the European Year of Youth were workshops, training sessions, webinars, conferences, debates, mentoring and meet-ups (see the report for more details.) ■

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  - 11 European Commission (December 6th 2021). *Report on the results of the call for ideas on the European Year of Youth*. Retrieved on October 18th from <https://youth.europa.eu/d8/sites/default/files/inline-files/Co-creation%20survey%20report.pdf>

# 3. Guidelines for Designing and Implementing Social Projects

## for Youth Entrepreneurship within Assets Confiscated from Organised Crime

As we have seen, European policies, although they move sluggishly, increasingly recognise the role that the social economy and especially youth entrepreneurship can play in the European economic development models of tomorrow. Young people are the only ones who can explain exactly what their needs are. And not only the needs. The civil society associations that work with them notice on a daily basis that young people are the most likely to think of solutions that concern them.

The idea is thus to create social economy projects that allow us to catalyse a dynamic of collaboration, to encourage a sense of community, by offering these young people the possibility of expressing themselves, of being heard and of building projects that belong to them and that reflect their aspirations. This approach is in line with the desire to raise political awareness by giving youth a voice. Obviously, to be able to provide effective solutions, this work must be conducted in cooperation with various actors: schools, incubators, NGOs, institutions, etc., and to be able to see the benefits, it is necessary to make funding plans on a long-term basis to allow these realities not only to emerge but also to be consolidated in the territory and over time.

Starting a social project is a long process, which may seem a bit daunting and is certainly challenging, but it is the only way to put civil society at the heart of social policies. But how to begin this process? Which steps to follow? How do we raise political awareness and develop a social economy by giving young people a voice? Despite the subject's complexity, this guideline aims to lay the groundwork to help young people and those working with young people to imagine, draft and implement a social entrepreneurship project, especially within an asset that has been confiscated from organised crime and mafias.

### The Six Ws+H of social projects

What does it take to start a project? What key questions need to be answered? To answer this need, we draw inspiration from a method used since ancient Greece, 'the 8 Qs', adapted in contemporary times by British journalism, the '5 Ws' method. These five key questions are indispensable in formulating a speech, an interview, or a newspaper article, but also in research development, problem solving, investigations and process planning. The 5 Ws stand for: *Why? Who? What? Where? When?* From there, different versions were conceived according to the result to be pursued, such as the 5W+H, where H stands for *How*, the 5W of Resilience, etc.

Since writing and developing a social project requires a real process of reflection, research and elaboration, in conceiving this toolbox we wanted to readapt this method to the drafting and implementation of a social project, regardless of whether or not this is one day feasible within a property confiscated from mafias or criminal organisations. ■

## THE SIX 'WS'

Finding the answer to 6 questions helps us to understand which steps we need to take, which problems to solve to bring the project to life. Basically, we must ask ourselves these 6 basic questions to unravel each element in which we are interested. What do we want to achieve? What contribution do we want to make to society? For whom exactly? With whom? And how? Where do we start?

### WHY? A chance to change

- What is the goal of developing a social project?
- What are the underlying motivations?
- Why is this project necessary?
- Why is it up to civil society to mobilise?
- Why should young people get involved in this project?
- Why social entrepreneurship and not other forms of business?

### For WHOM do we want to engage?

- Who is the target audience?
- When we talk about 'young people,' what age group do we want to reach?
- Who is also included directly or indirectly? Who is excluded?

## WHAT? Be Creative

- What products, services, events, activities, etc. would our target audience like to offer and/or find in their community?
- What networks and sectors are included in the social project?
- What social problem is the project in question intended to address? Is the problem as significant as assumed?
- What opportunities are young people missing in their socio-cultural-economic environment?

## WHERE? Wherever!

- Where do we want to conduct the project?
- In which Region? In which city? Where exactly?
- Indoors, outdoors or virtually?
- Are some areas prioritised over others?
- What offers are already provided in the project's geographic target area?

## WHEN? Time to act!

- It can take time to plan an event, get permits, etc. So do not delay; start now!
- It can help to make a timetable and list important dates and milestones in the order they need to be reached. This will help to keep track of the project, stay on schedule and be able to celebrate all the project's little achievements!
- And finally, when is the best time to officially launch the project?

## WITH WHOM? Alone we go faster, together we go further

Making choices, drawing up an action plan, launching a communication campaign when time is limited...

All this often leads us to work as lone riders. But is it really the right choice? Are we not missing a unique opportunity to grow and make our project grow? Are we not losing sight of our own engagement with our community? By racing against time, are we not losing our way? If it is true that alone we go faster, it is also true that together we go further.

Let us not waste any more time, but overcome the bar-

riers: it is time to reach out to all the people who will help make the project happen.

Who will we need to involve in achieving the goals? This may include ourselves, partners, volunteers, staff and mentors.

It is important to think about how we can involve these people in the project. What role can we (or our association) play? How can we delegate some of the tasks that need to be done so that we do not have to perform them by ourselves?

## AND HOW: RESPONDING TO THE COMPLEXITY OF THE WORLD

Last but not least, the ‘how’ is not the most complex ‘question’, but may represent a complexity of questions. Society is indeed complex, as are its balances and needs, which are themselves linked to global changes. The global economy is complex, with repercussions in the local economy. The labour market too is complex.

Complexity is seen in communication, which employs a variety of linguistic and cultural codes, changing between generations, which can render an achievement futile if mishandled. Complexity is evident in political choices, business rules, funding opportunities, public administration demands, etc. Countless complex difficulties must be faced, but there are also opportunities to be seized.

So ‘how’ do we develop a youth entrepreneurship project that meets a real need? Find the necessary resources? Overcome obstacles and turn them into opportunities?

### HOW Observe the community and be inspired

To effectively combat social inequalities and find the right solutions, one must first know and carefully observe the characteristics, needs and dreams of society. The human being is complex, as complex is the society in which it is expressed.

This complexity, however, is fascinating. Only by observing the many difficulties it goes through is it possible to generate infinite possibilities for overcoming the obstacles.

We can never ask enough questions, as the answers will never be exhaustive.

What are the main problems or needs of our communi-

ty? What can we and/or our community do to address these problems?

Which members of our community should we include in the conversation? In what ways is the support we could provide unique?

What are the individual needs that are mirrored in the collective needs? What are the personal motivations that become collective motivations? What social and environmental impact do we want to have? What goals do we want to achieve and what results do we want to obtain? How does this project nourish our culture, our economy, and our society?

## HOW Gathering resources

How can I find the necessary resources?

In addition to human resources, others need to be identified for the project to succeed: budget, materials, equipment, workspace, etc.

Finally, it is necessary to think about where to find these resources and how to get the necessary funding: grants, donations, partnerships, subsidies, etc.

## HOW Identify missing elements and key challenges

It may not be possible to obtain everything the project needs.

Several challenges may need to be addressed before the project can be completed.

It is important to try to identify these gaps and challenges before they arise.

Then it will be necessary to think about how to fill these gaps and overcome these challenges.

## HOW A Changing World: the challenge of interpreting tomorrow's needs

Identifying what a community is missing today is already a major challenge.

Society, economy, and technology are changing at an astonishing speed, and with them the needs and op-

portunities may change.

The challenge is then to anticipate these changes and update the project and its actions before new needs and new injustices arise within the community.

## HOW Share the project with the world and trigger the hummingbird effect<sup>1</sup>

Creativity and project management skills alone are not enough. Now it is time to tell the world! The best project can be planned, but if we keep it to ourselves, its impact will be limited!

Communicating via social networks, websites, newsletters or email groups or other means; sending press releases or giving interviews to local media... promot-

ing the social project throughout its development enhances not only the project, but also the target audience who will feel even more committed to the project.

Effective communication will also help to spread new ideas to other communities that could be inspired by the project. The Little Hummingbird has succeeded in triggering social change.

<sup>1</sup> The humming effect proposes that a specific event or action in a field can lead to and trigger other completely unexpected results in other fields. This interconnection cannot be predicted or planned, and it is only possible to notice it once it has already happened.



