



Erasmus+ strategic partnership focused on nine socially-oriented Sustainable Development Goals – SociSDG

June 10th, 2019

PRESS RELEASE

SociSDG consortium invites you to support the Sustainable Development Goals!

Fifth Learning Activity within the sociSDG project took place from 03th to 07th of June 2019 in Bratislava, Slovakia, hosted by [Pontis Foundation](#). Its participants were members of eight renowned European organizations in the field of SDGs: [The Croatian Institute for CSR](#) (coordinator, Croatia), [Global Impact Grid](#) (Germany), [LUM University](#) (Italy), [Pontis Foundation](#) (Slovakia), [Homo Eminens](#) (Lithuania), [Materahub](#) (Italy), [LatConsul SIA](#) (Latvia), [Datamaran](#) (UK), [Kaleidoscope Futures](#) (UK).

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy inclusion, peace and prosperity. To address and tackle social, economic and global issues, and help countries, governments and societies in combating them, SDGs define global priorities and aspirations for 2030 for the planet to "eliminate extreme discrimination, poverty and put the humanity on a path of sustainability." In order to help companies and contribute to the realization of the SDGs, the UN created "The SDG Compass," as stated "it presents five steps for companies to maximize their contribution to the SDGs." Still, this is only the beginning and we all need more knowledge. This project wishes to be a part of the solution.

[SociSDGs](#) is a project focused on achieving greater awareness and knowledge of adults, companies and decision makers when it comes to the measurement and implementation of social SDGs in business strategies, as well as the overall matter of sustainable development connected to the SDGs.

Considering the fact that the primary goal of the project is adult education and the exchange of the best practices between project partners when it comes to the social SDGs, a five-day learning activity was designed in order to understand and raise awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals:

- SDG4: Quality education - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, hosted by [Pontis Foundation](#) (Slovakia)
- SDG8: Decent work and economic growth - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, hosted by), [Datamaran](#) (UK)

It was impressive and inspiring to listen to solutions for quality education and promote decent work and economic growth:

- The **SigniFinance conference** took place on Monday 3rd of June and focused on financing of social innovations. Various speakers from Slovakia and abroad talked about their experience with impact financing and also discussed how we can scale impact investing and social innovations in Slovakia. It was a good opportunity for the participants of SociSDG learning activity to learn about issues connected to SDG8 and meet the representatives of Slovak civil society and e.g. banks involved in the space of social innovations, social finance and impact investing.
- On Tuesday 4th of June we visited **Nova Cvernovka**, a former vocational school turned into a community center, with artists, social enterprises and a community garden. We had a discussion with two cofounders of the place called Kabinet Pomalosti (The Cabinet of Slowness) a visually capturing space full of books, where various events and book clubs take place. Nova Cvernovka is one of the biggest such spaces in Central

Europe and can be an inspiration in integrating various SDGs together (education, zero waste, community and urban development, social innovations and even urban agriculture).

- On Wednesday 5th of June we visited **Progressbar**, the first hacker space in Slovakia, that hosts many events connecting the digital technologies to social innovations. A years ago they had the first 3D printer, the first bitcoin ATM and now they want to launch a first vertical community garden in their basement, focusing on vegetables grown with hydroponic technology and under LED lights.
- **Alena Kanabová** (Senior Manager at Accenture) and **Zuzana Tkačová** (Project Manager at Accenture) from [Accenture](#) (a leading global professional services company, providing a broad range of services and solutions in strategy, consulting, digital, technology and operations) presented their [S\(LOVE\)Code](#) program for raising a digitally skilled generation for the 21st century. They scaled their program to over 10% of Slovak primary school students and shared their good practice with other companies at Business Leaders Forum (BLF). The Digital Business Skills consortium at BLF see technology as fundamentally changing the future of work and situation in Slovak schools. Through the presentation of the S(Love)Code approach it was possible to see how Accenture measured the success of their work and achievement of SDG4. Examples are: From the 2016 there are more than 100 volunteers from 5 companies involved in teaching, more than 1000 trained teachers and more than 25% of all Slovak schools are reached in the project.
- **Juraj Kubica**, senior investment advisor at the [Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Investment and Informatization](#) presented a vision and strategy of Slovak Development until 2030. Mr. Kubica presented six national priorities for the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda as a result of extensive stakeholder participation and discussions with civil society.
- **Daniela Kellerova** from Pontis Foundation presented us the project Open Future which aims to give chance to those who fall through formal education system. Open Future is the extra-curricular program which brings top tech innovation, soft and hard skills mentoring to the disadvantaged communities. The project is now in the initial phase in which statistical analysis of disadvantaged households has been conducted and results of lack of digital technology are as follows: only 52% (40% for Roma) has internet at home and 28% has a laptop (21% for Roma) with the conclusion that the high quality after-school clubs are needed.
- **Dominika Hornakova** from the Pontis Foundation presented Slovak Telekom fund and its high impact philanthropy activities which started in 2007 for a target group of hearing impaired people; and the areas of education and marginalized communities. During the presentation, SDG4 related impacts were discussed, and the results of the Mobile Teacher program are as follows: active communities of parents with hearing-impaired kids; involvement of the state actors; substantially increased financial support from Ministry of Health to families with hearing-impaired kids; Government Implementation Unit conducted a cost-benefit analysis for Mobile Teacher program, involvement of other stakeholders - Social Policy Institute, Institute for Education Policy and Value for Money Unit. Online sign language interpreter program in the period from 2015 had 318 clients and around 2.200 calls yearly.
- **Norbert Maur** from the Pontis Foundation has presented Generation 3.0 program and EDUpoints – innovative spaces for teachers’ encouragement and support in education which is a part of Generation 3.0. The program has an ambition to improve Slovak education system and nurture skills for the 21st century. Currently three EDUpoints create space for regular meetings of leaders in education, teachers, school principals, pedagogy students and the general public interested in better learning for bringing inspirational incentives to improve education. Results are as follows: 72% teachers reported their motivation to teach has increased, 69% teachers reported that they were able to be use new didactic techniques immediately in teaching process, 88% would recommend EDUpoints to their colleagues.
- **Donato Calace** introduced the SDG8 and its progress in 2018 with interesting statistics from Report of the Secretary-General [The SDG Report 2018](#): (1) Labour productivity at the global level grew by 2.1% in 2017, what is fastest growth registered since 2010, (2) the global unemployment rate in 2017 was 5.6%, down from 6.4% in 2000, (3) Youth are 3 times more likely to be unemployed than adults, with the global youth unemployment rate at 13% in 2017.
- **Victor Riega Garcia** from insurance company [Aviva](#) and asset management, provided insight to modern slavery and supply chains. Around the world there are 40 million people under forced slavery, so there are many related risks like: doing business within immediate business operations with employed directly with the people that work in company’s buildings and are delivering services, and external risk related to suppliers and investments (how is the capital distributed in projects) so due diligence process and procurement practices are needed.

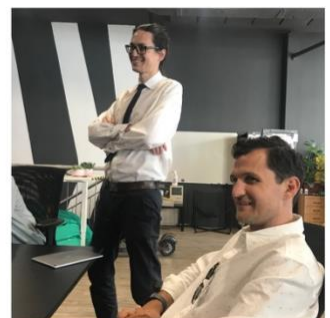
- **Kevin Chuach** from [London Business School](#) Research od SDG8, more specifically on relationship between investors with companies ESG issues and activism on the living wage. We got an insight on building coalitional power for labor rights between unions and (consumption-based) social movement organizations. According to the research made by Kim and Davis (2018), companies that excessively outsource and that are very geographically dispersed find a very difficult to certify the welfare conditions of their workers, so those companies should take more control and be more active in the monitoring the supply chain. Regarding the company's pay practices and income inequality (Cobb, 2018) if companies would focus their evaluation by external comparison (how is an employee paid in competitive company) that would reach more inequality than just looking at the quality of output of the individual employee. One example where NGO/CSOs are turning shareholder activism to raise concerns about Living Wage is an organization [ShareAction](#) which buys shares in top companies and goes to Annual general meetings to ask questions about management and board of directors about things like the living wage.

During the learning activity, a webinar on the SDG4 and SDG8 have been organized and recorded.

Here you can watch a recording of webinar:

- [SDG4](#)
- [SDG8](#)

Webinar provided information about best practice of SDG4 and SDG8 and their integration in the business models.



FUTURE ACTIVITIES

You can find additional information about the project on the website www.socisdg.com or connect through our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).