



## Enterprise Lithuania (Versli Lietuva) online Platform

### What?

Lithuania is a small Baltic country with vibrant economy. Following rapid growth over recent decade, the country still faces challenges such as persistent poverty, low labour productivity and relatively poor labour market inclusion. There is growing awareness around social entrepreneurship, and social enterprises are increasingly being put under the spotlight by Lithuanian policy makers and civil society as a promising vehicle to tackle these challenges (OECD, 2019). Although Lithuania made progress in supporting the access of SMEs and non-profit organisations to finance in recent years, there is still lack of available business support structures and a need to develop skills among social enterprises. Responding to this demand, Versli Lietuva (Enterprise Lithuania) developed and launched an [online platform](#) [1] for social enterprises in March 2021.

### Why?

In Lithuania, it was difficult for users to find trusted and easily accessible information on impact measurement, problem analysis, guidance on business model development and a list of business development service providers relevant for a social enterprise. Building on the recommendation in the 2019 OECD report *Boosting Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise Development in Lithuania* on the need to set-up awareness-raising strategies, Enterprise Lithuania took an initiative to develop a dedicated Platform for social enterprises. The funding for this initiative was provided from the State budget and included 30 000 EUR for the development of the platform and additional 3 000 EUR for its maintenance and improvements in 2022.

Launched in 2021, the Platform had an objective to share information and support community-building where news and information about financing opportunities and useful events could be shared and match-making could be supported. Specifically, it aimed to achieve several goals: (a) providing information on the current social enterprise ecosystems and support available; (b) sharing information on the available ways to understand and measure social impact; and (c) having a single database of social enterprises where any social enterprise could voluntarily register and can display their work.

### Key Activities

Prior to developing the Platform, the policy makers analysed similar platforms already implemented, such as

Startup Lithuania platform. They also looked at the relevant tools such as business model canvas and design thinking to identify relevant features, which they integrated into the Terms of Reference for the technical implementer of the Platform. Following a public procurement process the creation of the online portal was outsourced to an NGO 'Geri Norai'. Development of the contents for learning materials was part of the same public procurement call.

The Platform features trainings, exercises and other useful information about starting the company. It has a dedicated module helping social enterprises analyse their impact and create an impact measurement plan, assess the effectiveness of their solution, validate their business model and better understand the needs of the market and customers. The Platform helps social enterprises gain this knowledge and improve strategic business decisions allowing them to contribute effectively to solving social problems. The learning modules also focus on how social enterprises can be successful businesses and generate steady income streams alongside creating impact. Each part of the training material on the Platform has videos explaining the part in more detail, so the user knows how to fill in information.

When registering on the portal, social enterprises are required to complete a questionnaire and provide information about their mission and the reinvestment of their profits, among other areas. In addition, the website offers several degrees of engagement: social enterprises can access the training modules, they can display a short description, their logo as well as a link to their website and social media accounts and choose to engage and exchange with all those listed. Also, when registered users fill in a request for the capacity building, they were able to benefit from the mentorship advice. In that case, Enterprise Lithuania assigns a mentor and analyses the filled-in information and provides feedback to the user.

Moreover, the Platform not only supports existing social enterprises, but also potential social entrepreneurs helping them develop their idea into a viable business case taking advantage of the available trainings.

In the future, the Platform will also feature information on available financial support instruments and projects.

## Impact

Since the launch, by 2022 there have been 116 registrations of social enterprises (this list is visible to the public) and 157 social enterprise idea registrations.

Importantly, this Platform is currently the main database in Lithuania to collect and display data about social enterprises. It is also the main learning Platform for social enterprises that offers a free learning material on impact measurement.

## References

- <https://socialinisverslas.inovacijuagentura.lt/en/> [1]
- OECD/EU (2019), "Boosting Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise Development in Lithuania, In-depth Policy Review", OECD LEED Working Papers, 2019, OECD Publishing, Paris <https://doi.org/10.1787/8036b14d-en> [2]

**Source URL:** <https://betterentrepreneurship.eu/en/content/enterprise-lithuania-versli-lietuva-online-platform>

### Links

[1] <https://socialinisverslas.inovacijuagentura.lt/> [2] <https://doi.org/10.1787/8036b14d-en>