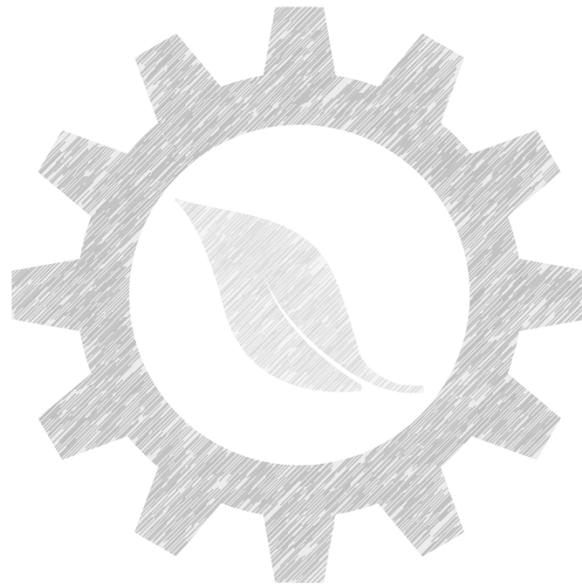




SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH INTRAPRENEURSHIP – NATIONAL STUDY AND GOOD PRACTICES' IDENTIFICATION IN BULGARIA

NATIONAL REPORT



Project No. 2020-1-IS01-KA204-065831

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

PREFACE

The initial stage of the SINTRA project implementation is about making an in-depth investigation of the national and sectoral settings for the development of environmental, social and economic sustainability, as well as the existing good practices in particular sectors with sustainability potential in the respective partner country, related to the positive effects that intrapreneurship can have on sustainability in one or more of its dimensions. This investigation, together with the gap analysis surveys and interviews, to be conducted as a next step within the framework of IO1 'Good Practices and Gap Analysis', will serve the purpose of filling a gap in the systematic mapping of sustainability-focused intrapreneurship-related training needs of employees and employers in the partner countries.

This National Report presents an overview of how the concept of sustainable development is reflected in the various strategic and programming documents at national level. An important emphasis of the Report are the three dimensions of sustainability, i.e. environmental, social and economic sustainability, as well as its sectoral focus. The existing initiatives, aimed at supporting sustainable development in one or more of its dimensions are also presented together with the effects of their implementation. Finally, the report identifies a number of existing good practices in the field of INTRAprenurship-supported sustainability, to be later elaborated on and incorporated in the SINTRA training material and interactive tools, to be developed in the framework of IO2, 3 and 4.

The National Report follows the generic structure, proposed by the IO1 Leader – Tora Consult (P6), in order to allow for comparability of reported information and outcomes across SINTRA partner countries, and includes the following chapters:

- Chapter 1. Environmental, social and economic sustainability – national and sectoral settings in Bulgaria;
- Chapter 2. Sustainability through INTRAprenurship – good practices in Bulgaria.

In preparing this material, a variety of sources have been used, incl. statistical data, reports and reviews, together with the own insights of the authors – Tora Consult's SINTRA project team. They would like to acknowledge the contribution of the individuals and organisations who made a contribution in drafting this report.

Tora Consult

December 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY IN BULGARIAN.....	5
1. ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY – NATIONAL AND SECTORAL SETTINGS IN BULGARIA.....	6
1.1. Sustainable development strategic goals.....	6
1.2. Sectoral dimensions of sustainability in Bulgaria.....	10
2. SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH INTRAPRENEURSHIP – GOOD PRACTICES IN BULGARIA.....	15
2.1. Sustainability supporting initiatives.....	15
2.2. INTRAprenurship in support of sustainable development – good practices in Bulgaria ..	17
CONCLUDING REMARKS	21
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES	22

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The topic of sustainable development and creating links between economic, social and environmental targets is long present in the national strategic documents of the Republic of Bulgaria. Appropriate strategies and programs have been adopted that reflect the basic principles of the 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development “Transforming our World” (2030 Agenda) and allow for coherence in the implementation of its goals. The priorities reflect in the Bulgarian strategic documents for sustainable development clearly outline the national ambition to generate high value-added products through better education, sustainable management of natural resources, innovation in an improved institutional environment, energy security through improved resource efficiency and improved transport links.

The concept of sustainable development implies that economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection are complementary. Bulgaria conforms to this principle by prioritizing education and investment in early childhood development, devoting funds to social protection and reducing inequalities and poverty, while at the same time looking for the path to sustainable economic development through a focus on high value-added economy, circular and social/solidarity economy.

In order to implement the 2030 Agenda and to maximize the fulfilment of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, it is important that all actors in public life are aware of them and believe that the Goals can be reached with joint efforts. After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Bulgaria has initiated a series of initiatives to raise awareness among citizens, businesses, institutions at all decision-making levels, students, teachers and trainers, media representatives, etc. Actions have been taken to fulfil the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the widest involvement of stakeholders.

Numerous activities have been initiated in Bulgaria in the above-mentioned three domains of sustainable development, incl. in the fields of research and development, information and communication technologies, education, green technologies and circular economy, social entrepreneurship, etc. in the public, private and NGO sectors. Among them, several case studies can be outlined as good practices in the framework of which intrapreneurship has contributed to boosting the sustainability in economic, social and environmental aspect for both the involved organisations and on a wider scale.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY IN BULGARIAN

Темата за устойчивото развитие и създаването на взаимовръзки между икономически, социални и екологични цели отдавна присъства в националните стратегически документи на Република България. Приети са съответните стратегии и програми, които отразяват основните принципи на Програмата на ООН за устойчиво развитие до 2030 г. „Трансформиране на нашия свят“ (Програма 2030) и позволяват съгласуваност при изпълнението на нейните цели. Приоритетите, отразени в стратегическите документи на България за устойчиво развитие, ясно очертават националната амбиция за генериране на продукти с висока добавена стойност, чрез по-добро образование, устойчиво управление на природните ресурси, иновации в подобрена институционална среда, енергийна сигурност чрез подобрена ресурсна ефективност и подобрени транспортни връзки.

Концепцията за устойчиво развитие предполага, че икономическият растеж, социалното приобщаване и опазването на околната среда взаимно се допълват. България се придържа към този принцип, като дава приоритет на образованието и инвестициите в развитието в ранна детска възраст, отделя средства за социална защита и намаляване на неравенствата и бедността, като в същото време търси път към устойчиво икономическо развитие чрез фокус върху икономика с висока добавена стойност, кръгова и социална/солидарна икономика.

За да се изпълни Програма 2030 и да се реализират в максимална степен нейните 17 цели за устойчиво развитие, е важно всички участници в обществения живот да са наясно с тях и да вярват, че целите могат да бъдат постигнати с общи усилия. След приемането на Програма 2030, България инициира поредица от инициативи за повишаване на осведомеността сред гражданите, бизнеса, институциите на всички нива на вземане на решения, студентите, учителите и обучителите, представителите на медиите и др. Предприети са действия за изпълнение на целите на ООН за устойчиво развитие с най-широко участие на заинтересованите страни.

В България са инициирани множество дейности в гореспоменатите три области на устойчиво развитие, вкл. в области като научноизследователска и развойна дейност, информационни и комуникационни технологии, образование, зелени технологии и кръгова икономика, социално предприемачество и др. в публичния, частния и неправителствения сектор. Сред тях могат да бъдат очертани добри практики, в рамките на които вътрешното предприемачество е допринесло за повишаване на устойчивостта в икономически, социален и екологичен аспект както на участващите организации, така и в по-широк план.



1. ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY – NATIONAL AND SECTORAL SETTINGS IN BULGARIA

1.1. Sustainable development strategic goals

The topic of sustainable development and creating links between economic, social and environmental targets is long present in the national strategic documents of the Republic of Bulgaria. Appropriate strategies and programs have been adopted that reflect the basic principles of the 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development “Transforming our World” (2030 Agenda) and allow for coherence in the implementation of its goals.

The main strategic document that formed the framework of national policies in the priority areas for Bulgaria was the National Development Programme: Bulgaria 2020. The vision and goals of the Programme outline 8 priority areas that correspond to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the country. These priorities reflect the national ambition to generate high value-added products through better education, sustainable management of natural resources, innovation in an improved institutional environment, energy security through improved resource efficiency and improved transport links.

Upgrades in the sustainable development orientation of Bulgaria have been made in the National Development Programme Bulgaria 2030 and are in line with the already adopted sectoral strategies for the period after 2020. Among them are:

- the Updated National Scientific Research Development Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria 2017-2030;
- the Integrated Transport Strategy for the period until 2030;
- the Updated National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Tourism in Bulgaria 2014-2030 and the Action Plan for it for the period 2017-2020;
- the Updated National Strategy for Demographic Development of the Population in the Republic of Bulgaria (2012-2030);
- the Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan until 2030 of the Republic of Bulgaria;
- the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2017-2030.

Some of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are included in the *Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan until 2030 of the Republic of Bulgaria*, which sets out the main goals, stages, means, actions and measures for the development of our national energy and climate policy. The main objectives set out in this plan are stimulating low-carbon development of the

economy; competitive and secure energy; reducing dependence on fuel and energy imports; guaranteeing affordable energy for all consumers.

The *Integrated Transport Strategy* for the period until 2030 has an even broader scope of interlinkages with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It aims at improving transport connectivity and accessibility and thus reaffirms the care for vulnerable groups – children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. Its priorities include modernization and development of transport infrastructure; development of intermodal transport; increasing the energy efficiency of transport; ensuring quality and easily accessible transportation in all regions of the country; limiting the negative impact of transport on the environment and human health; achieving a high level of safety and transport security. These priorities are fully in line with Goal 3 - increased road safety, Goal 7 – energy, Goal 8 – decent work and economic growth, Goal 9 – sustainable infrastructure, Goal 11 – sustainable cities with access to extended public transport, Goal 12 – sustainable consumption and production and Goal 14 – the oceans and seas.

Thus, adherence to the UN Sustainable Development Goals has been declared in the above-mentioned and many other sectoral strategies. Furthermore, the National Development Programme Bulgaria 2030 is based on a deliberate analysis of the socio-economic development of the country after its accession to the EU, which has been discussed and agreed with the social and economic partners within the Economic and Social Council and the National Council for Tripartite Cooperation. The Programme's vision, goals and priorities outline three main goals: 1) accelerated economic development; 2) mitigating adverse demographic trends; 3) achieving more inclusive and more sustainable growth by reducing social and territorial inequalities and promoting shared prosperity.

The concept of sustainable development implies that economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection are complementary. Bulgaria conforms to this principle by prioritizing education and investment in early childhood development, devoting funds to social protection and reducing inequalities and poverty, while at the same time looking for the path to sustainable economic development through a focus on high value-added economy, circular and social/solidarity economy.

Environmental policies are horizontal and are included in the definition and implementation of other policies. Plans and programs include measures to control economic and environmental parameters. EU funding for specific projects requires observing the principles of sustainable development and resource efficiency. All this contributes to the balance between economic, social and environmental benefits. The country actively supports The Green Initiative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) with the idea that combating climate change is an integral part of the fight for social justice.



Economic growth – high value-added economy

Bulgaria's plans for economic transformation toward high value-added sectors are related to the expectation of major changes in the structure of production factors. Long-term demographic trends lead to a steady decrease in the working-age population – by nearly 420 thousand by 2030, according to NSI demographic projections.¹ The pressure on the level of wages and salaries is growing in the context of participating in the European labour market, thus the country is losing the usual comparative advantages of its goods. This loss can be offset by incentives to invest in the high segments of priority sectors, such as eco-tourism or cultural tourism and the development of science and technology innovation centres for promoting innovations in small and medium-sized enterprises grouped in growing industrial clusters.

This is one of the Bulgaria's main goals for 2030: “to accelerate the economic convergence with the EU standard, through targeted and focused government support for increasing specialisation in products and industries characterized by a high technological and research intensity, which will facilitate gaining better and more prestigious positions in the global value chains”.²

Environmental protection – circular economy

The second direction of the sustainable economic development of the country is the implementation of the principles of the circular economy. A guiding principle of the circular economy is that the value of products, materials and resources should be maintained for as long as possible in the economic cycle, leading to sustainable production and consumption, as well as achieving sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.

Orientation toward the principles of the circular economy is extremely important for Bulgaria, because the resource productivity in the country remains relatively low. That is why the focus in the strategic planning until 2030 is on transforming the country's linear economy into a circular one. Actions are planned to increase the rate of circular use of materials in the economy. Support is provided for businesses intending to implement ecological innovation activities, including new ecological products and technologies.

Private investment in the economic sectors in Bulgaria relevant to the circular economy is estimated by Eurostat at around 90.5 million EUR, which is about 0.17% of the country's GDP in

¹ NSI. Population Projections by Sex and Age. Available at: <https://www.nsi.bg/en/content/6727/population-projectionssex-and-age>

² Vision, Goals and Priorities of the National Development Programme BULGARIA 2030. Ministry of Finance, Sofia, 2019. Approved by Council of Ministers Decision No. 33 of January 20, 2020. Ministry of Finance, Sofia, 2020, p. 4.



2017. 60,750 people are employed in these sectors and this number increased by 1.72% for a year, while the added value created in 2017 amounts to around 636.9 million EUR.³

Progress is made on the “Circular material use rate” indicator. It measures the share of recovered material that is sent back for use in the economy, thus reducing mining and extraction of primary raw materials. A higher indicator value means that more by-products replace primary raw materials, thus reducing the environmental impact of their extraction. According to Eurostat data, the share of recovered material in Bulgaria increased from 2.1% in 2010 to 5.1% in 2017.

Social inclusion – social and solidarity economy

The third direction of the country's sustainable development is the successful introduction of incentives and regulation for building a social and solidarity economy. Complemented by the ideas of a “just transition” to a low-carbon economy, it can provide a good foundation for realizing benefits in many dimensions. The just transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient development has the political intention of minimizing social and economic disadvantages and maximizing benefits by reallocating labour, creating “green” jobs, combined with appropriate social protection and responsive labour market policies. For its part, the social and solidarity economy is a possible path to sustainable development of society, i.e. it is an appropriate tool to strengthen its social pillar.

The regulations and instruments for the implementation of the principles of social economy in Bulgaria are established by the Law on Social and Solidarity-based Enterprises adopted in 2018. The strategic objective of the Law is to identify, develop and promote an economic sector which is predominantly socially oriented, and which generates social added value in terms of employment and social inclusion of vulnerable population groups.

For the purposes of legislation, a "social enterprise" is an enterprise which, regardless of its legal organizational form, has the main object of its activity the production of goods or the provision of services and combines economic results and social goals. The profit generated by its activity is predominantly spent on the implementation of social activity and/or toward a social goal. It is particularly important that the Law enables the identification of social enterprises, their recognition and promotion as economic entities which are beneficial for the sustainable development of the country. Firstly, they have explicitly stated economic and social (and often environmental) goals. Secondly, they involve different forms of cooperative, joint and solidarity relations.

³ Eurostat. Private investments, jobs and gross value added related to circular economy sectors. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/cei_cie010/default/table?lang=en

The most important feature of social entrepreneurship is the visible social effect, which is reflected in the investment of the revenue generated to support the target groups; the participation of part of the target groups in business activities (employment creation) and the provision of services to disadvantaged people, which are unattractive for the business; the creation of opportunities for professional and social integration; the creation of social added value and the saving of social costs. Social entrepreneurship is considered an important tool for achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, mostly these related to poverty eradication, reducing social inequality, and providing inclusive and equitable quality education.

1.2. Sectoral dimensions of sustainability in Bulgaria

In order to implement the 2030 Agenda and to maximize the fulfilment of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, it is important that all actors in public life are aware of them and believe that the Goals can be reached with joint efforts. After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Bulgaria has initiated a series of initiatives to raise awareness among citizens, businesses, institutions at all decision-making levels, students, teachers and trainers, media representatives, etc. Actions have been taken to fulfil the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the widest involvement of stakeholders.

Public sector

Bulgaria is actively cooperating with the EU Member States, the UN and other partners to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals. On Oct. 18, 2018, the EU Heads of State or Government adopted European Council conclusions in which they reaffirmed their full commitment to the 2030 Agenda and its implementation. Bulgaria actively participates in EU and UN multilateral cooperation, in the preparation of EU common positions for UN forums and bodies, including on economic, financial and administrative issues, as well as on sustainable development issues. There are 42 specialized councils at the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria working on the problems of demography, gender equality, economic development, environmental protection and other issues that are thematically related to the SDGs.

In 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs mapped the responsibilities of the public institutions for the respective Goals and the targets and indicators related to them. A detailed indicative table on the responsibilities of ministries and institutions for meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals in Bulgaria has been developed. The responsible ministries outlined sectoral policies and related strategies, concepts, plans and reports relevant to the implementation of the 17 UN

Sustainable Development Goals. The ministries' reviews provided opportunities to monitor and analyse the processes of integrating the SDGs into national policies.

In 2018, the Government approved an institutional framework for the preparation of the draft National Development Programme BULGARIA 2030, which should be adopted by the end of 2020.⁴ The National Development Programme BULGARIA 2030, like the previous National Development Programme: Bulgaria 2020, is a strategic framework document of the highest order in the hierarchy of national programming documents. This document determines the vision and the overall goals of development policies in all sectors of state governance, including their territorial dimensions.

The National Statistical Institute (NSI) is one of the leading institutions involved in the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In January 2019, the NSI presented to the users of statistical information the summary publication “Sustainable Development of Bulgaria 2005-2016”. The publication contains statistical indicators developed in accordance with the Eurostat sustainable development indicator system. Topically selected current data are published periodically – the “Statistical Reference Book 2019” in Bulgarian and English, the “Employment and Unemployment – Annual Data 2018”, the “Crimes and Persons Convicted 2018”, the “Education in the Republic of Bulgaria 2019”, etc.

Since December 2019, the MonitorStat information system has been put into operation, based on a statistical database of surveys of the National Statistical Institute and other statistical bodies. The system is centralized, web based, bilingual, with two main modules providing access to indicators and metadata from statistical surveys for national, European and international strategies and programs. The system is expected to play an important role as a national platform for monitoring of the performance on the indicators set out in key national strategy documents, including the implementation of the SDGs, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, etc.

At local level, the National Association of the Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria, which includes all 265 municipalities in the country, assists in directing public financing to fulfil the UN Sustainable Development Goals, including through European funds. The National Association of the Municipalities is represented in a number of advisory councils to the Council of Ministers, including the Consultative Council on Promotion of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, the National Council on Social Inclusion, the National Council for Child Protection, the National Council on Gender Equality, etc. which work toward achieving the principle of “leaving no one behind”.

⁴ Council of Ministers Decree No. 167 of Aug. 9, 2018 to Amend and Supplement Council of Ministers Decree No. 110 of 2010 on the Establishment of a Development Council at the Council of Ministers, State Gazette, Issue no. 67, 08/14/2018.



One of the most effective approaches to planning and financing local sustainable development programs and projects is the “community-led local development” approach. This is an approach aimed at creating employment by using local potential. It seeks to improve the quality of life and to reduce underdevelopment of local communities in territories with specific characteristics, for example in rural and fishery areas. The approach is applied bottom-up through the creation of Local Action Groups for territories with 10,000 to 150,000 inhabitants. These groups include representatives of local community stakeholders who jointly, while maximizing publicity, set territorial development priorities and integrate them into community-led development strategies.

Private sector

The private sector has the resources to make many of the UN Sustainable Development Goals come true. The private sector is interested in engaging with the ethical principles of corporate social responsibility and accordingly expects an improved business environment and quality education.

The private sector's commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals is mainly related to the adoption of the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR). In the fall of 2018, nearly 40 corporate social responsibility professionals established the Bulgarian Association of CSR Professionals. Business representatives express their interest in the concept of the relationship between Business and Human Rights.

Initiatives of business associations have been developed to create a suitable environment for sustainable economic development. The Bulgarian Industrial Capital Association announced at the end of 2018 the creation of the Institute for Sustainable Economic Development. Its aim is to work for sustainable economic development and improving the business environment and investment climate in Bulgaria through research and specialized programs. Its mission is to actively encourage entrepreneurship and to support the development of industrial relations and social dialogue.⁵

Many of the initiatives in the private sector are carried out by the Bulgarian Network of the UN Global Compact. The association, which brings together more than 30 organizations, presented its Strategic Plan 2015+ just 5 months after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in New York. Eight of the UN Sustainable Development Goals have been selected, namely: good health and well-being (Goal 3); quality education (Goal 4); decent work and economic growth (Goal 8); industry, innovation and infrastructure (Goal 9); sustainable cities and communities (Goal 11); responsible

⁵ Institute for Sustainable Economic Development Foundation. Available at: <http://www.ised.bg>

consumption and production (Goal 12); peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16); partnerships for the Goals (Goal 17). In 2020, the progress will be reviewed and the document will be updated.

After signing the European Pact for Youth, the Bulgarian Network of the UN Global Compact officially presented the Bulgarian National Action Plan. The first 27 organizations that have adopted the document unite on six priorities for change: improving skills, fostering vocational skills and practices, career guidance, attracting talent, supporting schools, teachers and principals and meeting the needs of the future.

Non-government sector

The non-government sector plays an important role in our country regarding the promotion and implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Coalitions of non-governmental organizations and many individual non-profit organizations work on the main topics of the 2030 Agenda within national or international projects.

The Bulgarian Platform for International Development assists the promotion of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It brings together 15 organizations with various fields of activity: global citizenship education, health care, gender equality, childcare, Roma integration. A series of projects and activities covered nearly 700 teachers from across the country, 42 young scientists, more than 500 representatives of local authorities, 38 politicians and more than 30 journalists. After a national competition, 40 schools obtained a Global School status – a recognition as a school with a tradition in development education and global citizenship education. The Platform has worked successfully to promote the Sustainable Development Agenda, aiming to deepen the understanding of the individual 17 SDGs by using the National educational standard for civic, health, environmental and intercultural education introduced on the basis of the Law on Pre-school and School Education (approved by Regulation 13 of Oct. 11, 2016).

Among the members of the Platform is the National Network for Children, which encompasses 152 organizations in the country, spread across eight regions. The Childhood 2025 Coalition operates within this network. Its members work to actively replace the existing institutional care for children with family or family-like care.

There are two major coalitions operating in the area of environmental SDGs – the ForTheNature Coalition and the Bulgaria Climate Coalition. By bringing together more than 80 non-governmental organizations, they are working for strengthening citizens' involvement in environmental issues, for sustainable development-oriented business and for a law-abiding state. They help to stop deforestation, illegal construction or attempts to change the status of protected

areas. Their representatives are involved in the development of climate standards at the national and international level.

The National Youth Forum gathers the energy of 50 international, national, local and political youth organizations from across the country with the motto “It's time for the youth to take the floor!” The organization is working to create and adopt a new National Youth Strategy, in which the UN Sustainable Development Goals should be clearly outlined.

The Coalition for the Development of Media Literacy is an informal voluntary association of nearly 20 organizations and networks working in the fields of education, media and civil society. Its aim is to stimulate public debate on topics related to media ethics, hate speech prevention and discriminatory messages.

The Alliance for Protection Against Gender-Based Violence is an association of organizations from across the country working professionally to prevent and protect against all forms of gender-based violence by providing support (psychological, legal, social) to more than 2,000 women and their children during the last year. The Alliance operates a 24-hour toll-free helpline for professional support in cases of domestic violence. The Academy for Violence Prevention, which was created by the Alliance, has trained over 250 professionals. In its programs, the Alliance pays special attention to vulnerable groups of women and girls from ethnic minorities, women with disabilities, women seeking and in the process of international protection.

The Citizen Participation Forum is a network of Bulgarian civil society organizations from all over the country, working to increase citizen and NGO involvement in policy formulation and decision making. Amalipe – one of the most active organizations working to reduce the number of Roma school dropouts, participates in the Forum.

The United Nations Association of Bulgaria works in a national network of UN clubs to promote the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It advocates for increasing Government and parliamentary engagement with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Bulgarian Youth Delegates to the UN Program is implemented with the assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Through networking, the ideas of civil society organizations reach the most isolated settlements and contribute to the implementation of the principle of “leaving no one behind”.

Community centres, which are traditional cultural centres in Bulgaria, play a major role. The Global Libraries – Bulgaria Foundation (GLBF) is working to promote the UN Sustainable Development Goals under the motto “The library – a place for everyone”. In partnership with the public libraries, the Foundation reaches even the smallest settlements with acting community centres.

2. SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH INTRAPRENEURSHIP – GOOD PRACTICES IN BULGARIA

2.1. Sustainability supporting initiatives

The aspirations to achieve the SDGs in the field of **economic growth** are reflected in the creation of three Centres of Excellence and eight Centres of Competence. The creation of Regional Innovation Centres is forthcoming, located in the 6 NUTS-2 statistical regions of Bulgaria, with the exception of the Yugozapaden (South-West), in which Sofia (the capital city) is located. Concepts and strategies for digital transformation of Bulgarian industry are being implemented.

One of the eight EU supercomputers is located in Sofia. The supercomputer will be available for use by the scientific community, business and the government for developments in the fields of health, climate, disaster simulation, pharmaceuticals, aerodynamics analysis, nuclear reactor simulations, cybersecurity, etc.

The successful transition to a value-added economy is not possible without higher and more effective expenditure on applied research and science. Efforts to strengthen higher-level research institutions with the stated ambition for successful commercialization of their research results are expected to continue for the period until 2030. The integration of the Bulgarian research community into the international community is even stronger, more inter-sectoral links are being developed and the cooperation between higher education institutions, scientific institutes and business is improved.

The intersection point in completing this task is education. It is important to achieve results in the fight against early school leaving, in vocational education and, most importantly, in lifelong learning. The Law on Vocational Education and Training establishes a system for validation of knowledge, skills and competences acquired through non-formal education and informal learning. Improved employment rates of low-skilled workers would free the welfare state from its redistributive functions and would provide resources for the sustainable development of a larger number of business sectors.

The IT Career Education Program helps bring digital technology into the economy and society. This National Program offers training in programming for students from all over the country to gain professional qualification as an “applied programmer”. The training is intended for students in secondary schools, specialized gymnasiums and vocational gymnasiums who do not study for this profession. Training is organized in the students' free time during the week, on Saturdays and

Sundays or during the holidays, with the learning process being conducted both in-person and online.

In the area of **environmental protection** there have been successful examples of industrial symbiosis where companies partner so that waste from one production is used as a resource in another. Such industrial symbiosis is present in the system of Aurubis Bulgaria. At the Pirdop plant (part of Europe's largest copper producer – Aurubis), a significant proportion of the intermediate products are returned to production instead of being disposed of. These include various types of slag, dust, scrap, gypsum, etc. This means that raw materials have been saved, which has reduced the costs of the company for purchasing them, as well as for waste management. Similar projects have been implemented in other Bulgarian metallurgical plants, such as KCM AD – Plovdiv.

Good practices are also being introduced in the field of education, which prepare young generations for the challenges of sustainable development and the sustainability approach in various aspects of its implementation, including in the areas in which they will work in the future. A good example is the first educational organic farm for children “Sunny Garden”, built on the territory of the Agro-ecological Centre at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv. The aim of “Sunny Garden” organic farm is to contribute to ecological education of children and to raise the awareness of students about sustainable production, especially organic farming, sustainable way of life and preservation of the environment.

The National Trust EcoFund (NTEF) coordinates the project “Towards Introduction of Climate Action in the Educational Curriculum of Bulgarian Schools” 2018-2020 (TICA), which is implemented under the Project Financing Program of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety “European Climate Initiative”. It includes as partners the Independent Institute for Environmental Issues (UfU) in Berlin and the National Centre for Improving the Qualification of Pedagogical Specialists at the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science. The aim of the project is to develop and implement an ongoing training program for teachers of all disciplines across the country on climate change and energy efficiency. Teaching programs for 120 teachers from all over the country are prepared by university professors. It is envisaged that in the course of the implementation of the project activities, a partnership will be established with several ministries and with the municipalities in whose schools the new teaching materials will be applied.

An important step with great potential for good results in the implementation of SDGs in the field of **social inclusion** is the establishment of a National Database for Social Enterprises in Bulgaria, as well as the registration and maintenance of a distinctive certification mark for them, which distinguishes them from other companies on the market and encourages consumers to use their goods and services. The implementation of national training programs for the development of

the management capacity of social enterprises is also part of the measures to stimulate and support them.

Among the most active stakeholders in realizing social and solidarity economy in the country, directed to meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals, are the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Social Assistance Agency, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the National Association of Employers of Persons with Disabilities, the Open Society Institute, the Trust for Social Achievement, etc. The “Social Enterprises in Bulgaria” Forum, an informal association of people and organizations working in the field of social entrepreneurship is operating to improve the environment. It facilitates the exchange of information and the development of policies to support social entrepreneurship in the country.

The “BACB Challenge” is a joint competition program for social entrepreneurs between the BCause Foundation and the Bulgarian American Credit Bank, with a focus on green and sustainable initiatives. It provides start-up entrepreneurs with the opportunity to participate in structured training, independent work, coaching sessions, as well as in personalized activities with leading professionals and entrepreneurs in all areas of business. At the end of the program, selected projects receive funding for business projects focused on the concept of ecological and sustainable development.

The “Academy for local entrepreneurs” is a training program specially designed for people with entrepreneurial ideas who want to start their own business. The program is targeted at the tobacco-producing regions in the country – the districts of Kardzhali, Haskovo, Blagoevgrad and Silistra. It is carried out by the Rinker Entrepreneurship and Training Centre at the BCause Foundation as part of the “Funny Summer, Caring Autumn 2019” program. Three successful editions of the Academy have already been held.

2.2. INTRAprenurship in support of sustainable development – good practices in Bulgaria

Success story No.1: Boosting entrepreneurial and business skills in the tourism sector

Brief overview

The good practice was implemented in the period June 2013 – July 2015 by the University of National and World Economy, Sofia, Bulgaria (UNWE) in consortium with the Institute of Tourism, Bratislava, Slovakia (IoT) and the Bulgarian Association for Rural and Eco Tourism (BARET) under contract No. BG051PO001-7.0.07-0236-C0001/ 19.04.2013, Grant scheme ‘Without borders – Component 1 – Phase 2’ within Priority Axis 7: Transnational and Interregional Cooperation of the

Human Resources Development Operational Programme 2007-2013, co-financed by the European Union through the European Social Fund.

The objective of the good practice was to contribute to boosting the employability and adaptability of students as well as encouraging job creation in the tourism sector, incl. through self-employment. Supporting young people for business start-ups in the tourism sector and increasing the capacity of the private sector at regional and local level for absorption of the resources, granted through the EU funds were also among the specific objectives of the initiative.

The project activities aimed at creating an innovative platform for the transfer of good practices in the field of tourism from the partner country to Bulgaria through development of a training package and delivery of training courses for sustainable improvement of the entrepreneurial and business skills to directly address the problems of the target group in the tourism sector

The development of a training course under the project aimed at creating skills related directly to the elaboration of business strategies, use of different business scenarios and evaluation of the choices made. The course programme was elaborated on the basis of case studies that encouraged decision making, while the training course content directly addressed the needs of the target group. The trainees were offered an innovative interactive environment to simulate different scenarios and compare the achieved results.

Reasons for consideration

The success story is an example of an intrapreneurially-oriented action, initiated by one of the professors at UNWE. Furthermore, the sustainability of the initiative is ensured by the opportunities created for using the accumulated experience and the developed interactive learning platform for creating new academic practically-oriented content for education of students in the field of tourism. Upon completion of project activities, the project website and the e-learning platform developed continue to be administered by a team of IT Department at UNWE. The developed online training package can also be used for the purposes of continuing education, conducted by the Institute for Postgraduate Studies at UNWE.

Success story No.2: Sports GPS outfit development

Brief overview

The good practice is related to the development of an innovative product – outfit for alternative and extreme tourism and sport with imbedded communication device for GPS tracking produced

through usage of innovative seamless technology in Brizosport – a company for producing sports and leisure outfit. The activity was implemented in the period November 2016 – October 2018.

The developed innovative product was related to the creation of outfit for alternative and extreme tourism and sport with imbedded communication device for GPS tracking produced through usage of innovative seamless technology. The expectations were that it would lead to expansion of the scope of application of smart technologies in the sports outfit domain. Through embedding a GPS module, it becomes possible to track the movement, duration, physical strain and physical activity with wide application for the fans of extreme sports, tourism and alpinism. Another significant aspect besides reporting the route covered was the possibility to transmit location data through additional map, as this function is related to the personal security of the outfit users, especially in mountain hikes in heavy weather conditions, extreme tourism and alpinism, trekking, winter sports, etc.

Reasons for consideration

The good practice is considered for a sustainability-oriented intrapreneurial initiative, as the idea for the new product was conceived and activity initiated by one of the sports outfit designers in the company. Furthermore, the successful implementation of the initiative contributed to a high extent to supporting the sustainable development of the company, both on the national and international market for sports outfit.

Success story No.3: Eco Mobility

Brief overview

Eco Mobility was an EU-funded project implemented in the period August 2017 – July 2019 by Delia Auto Ltd. – an R&D company, specialised in the development of innovative transportation solutions. The particular initiative was aimed at developing, testing and patenting an innovative product, namely a dual fuel system for an internal combustion engine, as it was seen as a product with high environmental, economic, financial potential and high added value.

More specifically, the initiative's goal was to develop a propane-butane conversion system for internal combustion engines, and to eventually reach the stage of readiness of the product for mass production and implementation in transport vehicles. The new system has been significantly improved compared to then existing solutions on the market, in terms of its properties and use, technical characteristics, built-in components and materials, degree of ease of use and return on investment by the end user, as well as the production of lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Reasons for consideration

The success story is an example of how an idea for a new product generated by one of the researchers in an R&D company can have a high potential and added value for sustainable impact on both macro and micro level. Thus the initiative contributes to the sustainable development of transport and energy, as well as the above-mentioned company itself.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The topic of sustainable development and creating links between economic, social and environmental targets is long present in the national strategic documents of the Republic of Bulgaria. This is reflected in a number of strategies and programs which have been adopted at national level to incorporate the basic principles of the 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development “Transforming our World”.

The concept of sustainable development implying that economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection are complementary, is conformed to in Bulgaria by prioritization of education and investment in early childhood development, devoting funds to social protection and reducing inequalities and poverty, while at the same time looking for the path to sustainable economic development through a focus on high value-added economy, circular and social/solidarity economy.

Numerous activities have been initiated in Bulgaria in the above-mentioned three domains of sustainable development, incl. in the fields of research and development, information and communication technologies, education, green technologies and circular economy, social entrepreneurship, etc. in the public, private and NGO sectors. Among them, several case studies can be outlined as good practices in the framework of which intrapreneurship has contributed to boosting the sustainability in economic, social and environmental aspect for both the involved organisations and on a wider scale.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Council of Ministers (2012), National Development Programme: Bulgaria 2020.

Council of Ministers (2020), Bulgaria 2030: National Development Programme

Council of Ministers (2020), Bulgaria 2030: National Development Programme – Detailed Strategy

Council of Ministers (2020), National Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Council of Ministers (2020), Sustainable Development Goals: Voluntary National Review

European Commission (2020), 2020 European Semester: Assessment of progress on structural reforms, prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances, and results of in-depth reviews under Regulation (EU) No 1176/2011: Country Report Bulgaria 2020, COM(2020) 150 final, Brussels.

European Environment Agency (2011), Survey of resource efficiency policies in EEA member and cooperating countries, Country profile: Bulgaria.

European Environment Agency (2019), Resource efficiency and the circular economy in Europe 2019 – even more from less: An overview of the policies, approaches and targets of 32 European countries, EEA Report No. 26/2019.

Mantcheva, D., S. Karaboev, R. Stefanov (2012), Green Growth and Sustainable Development for Bulgaria: Setting the Priorities, Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

Ministry of Finance (2020), Europe 2020: National Reform Programme, 2020 Update.

Ministry of Regional Development and Public Work (2005), National Regional Development Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2005-2015.

National Statistical Institute (2019), Sustainable Development of Bulgaria 2005 – 2016, Sofia.

Nozharov, S., P. Koralova (2017), Failures of the national policy for sustainable development of Bulgaria – economic dimensions, School of Economics and Management of Public Administration in Bratislava.