

Social Innovation in Romania

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In 2006 a law defining social enterprises (Work Integration Social Enterprises WISE) has been adopted in Romania. It defined social enterprises as enterprises whose main objective is the professional integration of people experiencing difficulties in the labor market, mainly due to discrimination (Roma people, people with handicap, women, etc.). The integration would be done in sheltered workshops or training and professional qualification.

This definition harmed the development of social entrepreneurship which remained in an infancy stage while it perpetuated the existence of the social and solidarity-based economy with the development of authorized protected units, cooperatives and credit union.

In the past 10 years, there has been a certain evolution of the sector:

- An [Institute on Social economy](#) (IES) has been created
- The international organization [NESST](#) created an office in Romania, and supports social entrepreneurs through consultancy and funding opportunities. NESST also organizes the yearly Social Enterprise day in Bucharest.
- An office of the international network of co-working spaces [Impact Hub](#) opened in Bucharest in the Summer of 2012. They organized last year a competition called Social impact award.
- “[Tara lui Andrei](#)” is a CSR initiative of OMV Petrom Romania organizes a yearly competition of social entrepreneurs called Fabricat in Tara lui Andrei
- The Bucharest university of economic studies, [ASE](#) has created this year a class on social entrepreneurship

Here are some examples of social business initiatives in Romania:

- [Pink Lime](#), a circular economy project (cradle-to-cradle) producing hammocks and bean bags. Pink Lime was among the finalists of EIB Social Innovation Tournament
- [Concordia](#), an authorized protected unit which aims the social reintegration of children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. They have taken a social entrepreneurship approach, creating a bakery, a coffee space and shops selling products created by Concordia apprentices.
- [Village life](#), a project promoting sustainable rural tourism in Romania, they are winners fo Nesst award