

# Entrepreneurial opportunities in the social field

## Dimitra's story

### Introduction

Create your own social business for people with disabilities in Cyprus, is a challenge. Lack of inclusion of people with disabilities in legislation, many social stereotypes, lack of special training from the early stages by specialized teaching and therapeutic staff to reach the maximum of their potential and to be in a position / to have the necessary supplies (knowledge, skills), are the main factors that make it difficult for people with disabilities in Cyprus to be able to participate in the business sector.

However, those who are interested, have abilities, high motivation and have support from others they can take a first step towards this. Like Dimitra has...

Want to meet  
Dimitra

[Watch the video.](#)

*Dimitra has a social entrepreneurial dream. As she says, she would like to work in a fruit and vegetable store/market whose employees will be her friends from her school who have disabilities. Through this social enterprise she wants to give the opportunity to many people with disabilities to be able to work, make their own money, to socialize with other people-customers and with each- other, to make friends and have this way a happier life!*

*Let's help her to make it true!*

### FIRST STEP: Search for ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES in the SOCIAL field

1. Get familiar with Entrepreneurship in the Social field and its basics
2. Search employment options and legislation in Social Field for people with disabilities

*Dimitra made a step (Search for ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES in the SOCIAL field), She found a job in the fruit and vegetables department of a large supermarket (as part of corporate social responsibility) with the help of her teachers of vocational rehabilitation class (who have been appointed by the Social Integration Office and work at "Kentro Amea Agios Lazaros" centre for people with disabilities). Dimitra's purpose was to work in the subject that interests her, to have an income, to learn the job and to acquire the necessary skills as much as she can based on her abilities and disability.*

In Cyprus it is possible for people with disabilities to participate in social Entrepreneurship. They can participate in vocational rehabilitation classes that can give the basic knowledge about several jobs that included in the marketplace, about appropriate behaviours / attitudes in the workplace and safety issues. Then if they meet the criteria and there are available jobs, they can be placed in a part- time one that is suitable for them. Their instructors give them continuous support, aiming the succeed of the participants (to stay at work and being the more productive it becomes).

The requirements that the integration office has to offer sponsorship to the individuals are the employers not to exceed 500 euro in salary excluding appropriate benefits - social insurances

Responsible for carrying out this program is the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance of Cyprus and specifically the Department of Social Inclusion.

**TIP:** For support go visit local organization that offer entrepreneurial guidance. Search in detail legislation in your country connected with this specific field ... In Cyprus this guidance is offered by Social Inclusion Department (you can visit them or search info on line at [http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dsid/dsid.nsf/index\\_gr/index\\_gr?OpenDocument](http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dsid/dsid.nsf/index_gr/index_gr?OpenDocument) )

Businesses that cooperate with this programme and offer jobs to people with disabilities, incorporate it into their corporate social responsibility actions.

The most common jobs are in supermarkets, car washes, factories (product packing, storekeepers), kindergarten assistants, and secretaries' assistants.

*For example, Dimitra found it possible to start working where she wanted under this specific programme, in a part- time job that best fits her interests, abilities and competences and opportunities in local environment. E.g. Dimitra works in the fruit and vegetables department of a large supermarket. There she wipes, she arranges the products on their shelves and in their crates. She also serves the customers, tells them where to find a product they are looking for, she also puts fruits and vegetables in bags in the quantity they ask for. In the warehouse she cleans beans, she throws away the dried onion skins, cleans the good ones from the spoiled products (fruits and vegetables) and puts them from big bags and crates to smaller ones. In addition, she informs the person in charge if there is any damage to products they receive. She knows how to recognize and name all fruits and vegetables. She can read labels with the product names and place the correct label in each fruit or vegetable crate. She works under the supervision and guidance of a staff department supervisor and also under the guidance of the teacher in charge of vocational education (who has been appointed by the Social Integration Office and works at "Kentro Amea Agios Lazaros" centre for people with disabilities)*

*Dimitra's entrepreneurial dream in the social field, is to work in a fruit and vegetable store/market whose employees will be mostly people with disabilities, like her. Through this social enterprise she wants to give the opportunity to many people with disabilities to be able to work, make their own money, to socialize with other people-customers and with each- other, to make friends and be happy. Her whole idea arose when her beloved friend Lakis was not allowed/ able to work with her in the same supermarket and department. Also, because she really likes to work in a fruits-vegetable store.*

An individual with disabilities in Cyprus is not allowed to start work on its own social entrepreneurship by him/herself because of the legislation. Therefore, a person with disabilities who has an idea to create a Social Enterprise, must find a group of people, mentors, associates



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without disabilities, to create together a cooperative company that meets the criteria set by law and has a clear purpose of social change.

(The law on the creation and maintenance of a register of social enterprises of 2019

<http://www.dgepcd.gov.cy/dgepcd/dgepcd.nsf/All/DF9FFC9C5ADDE521C2258464001F2F39>).

If you want to get the real job search social enterprises in your local environment, and get in touch with those who are dealing with the social field.

The list of social enterprises in all partner countries are available at : \_\_\_\_\_

*Task: Please help Dimitra to find the right supporting team of partners to share the same dream and willing to create a social company with her that meets the required criteria to be approved by the Cypriot Government as SOCIAL ENTERPRISE! Her "social fruit market".*

**Let's help her to do the next step towards her dream ...**

## SECOND STEP: BE AWARE OF SPECIFIC SKILLS NEEDED FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SOCIAL FIELD

### SPECIFIC SOFT SKILLS

In order for a person with disabilities to support a social enterprise he needs to have some generic soft skills in the social field

Here is the list of several possible soft skills in the social field:

- Understanding and identifying social problems/needs
- Problem solving skills by working on a social purpose- (solving social problems such as environmental protection. education, health care, poverty, energy, water resources, etc)
- Setting social goals in terms of social change
- Effective communication with the people involved, affected by the social action
- Creative Thinking
- Logical Thinking
- Critical thinking
- Team- work
- Motivating influencing skills
- Flexibility

*Dimitra has been able to identify the social need to provide more jobs to people with disabilities that fit their needs, abilities and integrate them into a pleasant, collaborative, welcoming work environment. And as a way of making this change the idea of a social fruit market.*

*She adapts easily to both the immediate and wider social environment. She is a very friendly, cheerful personality and she really likes to be social. She is polite, and she shows respect where she should. She cares about the people around her, and she is willing to help them*



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*when they need it. She loves team- work. She can perceive and follow rules and orders. When she doesn't understand something, she asks for help.*

*Dimitra recognizes and states that in order to realize her entrepreneurial dream she would need a team of people in charge who know good math, be able to use money that she can't, to run he business, find- buy- bring products to the store. She admits that she alone would not be able to make it, and she would not want to run a business with no support because that would cause her lot of stress.*

*So she is able to think critically, find and recognize her strengths and weaknesses and based on these some of the areas that will need expert help to meet the needs of the business she wants to create.*

*Although, she does not have the knowledge and the conceptual background to understand what social change is, what social enterprise is and so on. Her ideas stem from her spontaneity, her experiences, her innocence, her love for her friends and fellow human beings, her romanticism, creativity and imagination. Nevertheless, her dream does not cease to be socio-entrepreneurial and could be realized if we helped her.*

## SPECIFIC MARKETING SKILLS

- Good oral and written communication
- Promotion / presentation of the basic actions and the social benefits of their business.
- Application of advertising and communicational strategies through social media, publications, videos, TV interviews, to inform the public about the purposes, actions and positive results of their social enterprise.
- Creativity as the foundation of effective marketing
- Motivating influencing skills, in order to attract new interested audiences (for employment, to offer donations for support, volunteers, investors, people who need help that the enterprise provides, etc)

*Dimitra is very communicative, she can have complete dialogues, describe her ideas, write, approach, and influence other people. Recognizes the concept of advertising and knows media such as advertising on television, radio, and print. But he does not have the ICT marketing skills needed at all. In addition, she will need help in this case, guidance from people who will be by her side and education.*

## THIRD STEP: CREATION OF INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS PLAN

- Vision and objectives / detailing goals
- Preparation of a business plan for an entrepreneurial idea in the Social field (market analysis, competitive landscape analysis, implementation plan, financial plan, advertising, measuring performance, providing guidance, growth and pricing strategy, risk analysis...)



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### The Business Model Canvas

Designed for:

Designed by:

Date:

Version:

<p><b>Key Partners</b> </p> <p>group of people, mentors, associates without disabilities, which can cover basic functional positions</p>	<p><b>Key Activities</b> </p> <p>product sales, store organization, customer service, store finances</p>	<p><b>Value Propositions</b> </p> <p>the innovation of the business idea and its social goal</p>	<p><b>Customer Relationships</b> </p> <p>hospitable, direct, polite, positive</p>	<p><b>Customer Segments</b> </p> <p>effective customer service</p>
	<p><b>Key Resources</b> </p> <p>social Integration office Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance</p>		<p><b>Channels</b> </p> <p>perishable traders fruit and vegetable producers</p>	
<p><b>Cost Structure</b> </p> <p>operating expenses of a store, purchase of products for sale, salaries of employees</p>		<p><b>Revenue Streams</b> </p> <p>revenue from the sale of fruits, vegetables and other products</p>		

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To add video with Dimitra (creation of business plan).



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