



Recent data from a feedback research among social enterprises

The data were collected through an online survey of social enterprises on the [DarPazar platform](#)¹ but we believe that they are sufficient to outline the main trends at sectoral level.

The biggest *risks to the activity of social enterprises (SE)* due to the dynamic environment are related to:

- cessation of production activity due to changed consumer demand of products and services offered by the SEs and the lack of support for their timely adaptation, and
- suspension of the provision of social support and services for vulnerable groups (in these SEs, who work with such, and from the Community of DarPazar this is nearly 70% of the registered).

The dynamics of economic and social life require rapid reorganization and adaptation of the SE operations. This requires a *resource of knowledge and good practices, and in some cases operational capital* to further cover the costs incurred for reorganization and adaptation of production activities and social support.

72% of the respondents plan a concrete change in the way of organizing the activities of the SE, which was not pre-planned. Almost half of them (47%) plan to do it as a change in the way of organizing the activity (work from home, remote work or introduction of shifts). About one third of the rest (30.8%), plan to adapt through developing new services or products that are up-to-date and adapted for online supply and meet customer demands better.

The three most *needed areas for external expertise*, in order to minimize the risk of suspension or significant reduction of the volume of activity of the SEs are:

- online advertising and marketing with a focus on reviewing social communication channels of the SEs and updating of its communication activities; review of the marketing channels of the SEs and updating of its marketing activities (requested need by 56, 3% of the respondents);
- human resources management such as developing internal procedures for reorganization of the workforce, distribution of functions and tasks, tracking quantity and quality of results, work performed, etc. (stated need by 12, 5% of the respondents);
- adapting products or services to the changed environment and consumer demand (stated need by 12.5% of the respondents).

Among *the biggest fears of social enterprises* are:

- the lack of staff caused by the potential impossibility of socially vulnerable groups (due to health reasons, concerns of families and loved ones, new lockdown) which are engaged in production, work or attend a social service that supports them in work;
- The lack of opportunities for the realization of products and services (bazaars, exhibitions and so on), lack of orders and hence - inability to pay the staff hired now;
- The obsolescence of the offered products and services due to the changed consumer demand and the lack of financial resources to provide a process for adapting or developing new products and services.

¹ Online survey sent to 28 social enterprises registered on the DarPazar platform (www.darpazar.bg), data received from 18 social enterprises from all over the country in the period October 30 - November 5, 2020.