

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

Improving the Position of Women in the
Labour Markets of the Danube Region

Interreg
Danube Region



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WIN

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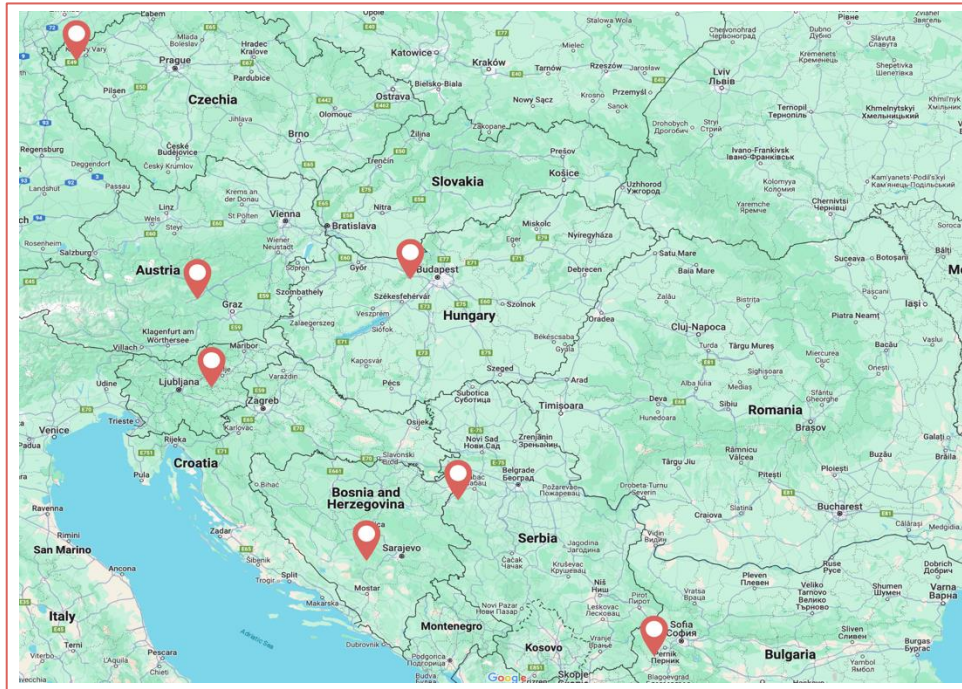
Introduction

Social innovations offer a powerful approach to addressing the challenges women face in securing fulfilling employment. These solutions directly target the root of societal needs and problems, leading to lasting positive change. In this document, the WIN project offers a detailed framework for establishing WIN Innovation groups that will develop and implement such solutions, empowering women within the Danube Region.

The WIN project is dedicated to enhancing employment opportunities for women in the Danube Region. We are actively working within seven pilot regions: Styrian Iron Route Region (Austria), Herzeg-Bosnian Canton 10 (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Radomir Municipality (Bulgaria), City of Loznica (Serbia), Sokolov District (Czech Republic), Tatabánya-Oroszlány-Dorog Region (Hungary), and Trbovlje Municipality (Slovenia). The social innovations that will emerge from the WIN project will be a direct response to recognized women's needs and institutional barriers that prevent women from realizing their professional potential. In this way, the project will contribute to women's empowerment and well-being. Unlocking women's professional potential in different territorial and institutional contexts through a common project methodology is expected to provide a set of role models for other peripheral industrial regions in the Danube Region affected by processes of precariousness, social exclusion, unemployment and out-migration.

The hallmark of the WIN project lies in its dedication to fostering meaningful interaction with the target groups within pilot regions. Our unique approach prioritizes the active involvement of these groups in every stage, from the initial

design phase to the shaping and real-world testing of social innovations. This ensures that our solutions are not just theoretical constructs but are finely tuned to meet the actual needs and realities of the communities we serve.



Guidelines provide a direction for developing ideas for social innovations, which includes 3 main steps:

1. Setting a WIN innovation group (Chapter 3): In each pilot region there will be a WIN Innovation group, representing target groups and stakeholders and driving the innovation development and implementation process.
2. Feeling the Change (Chapter 4): This is the first stage of development work, during which the WIN Innovation group will engage in collecting and analyzing data, including interaction with target groups and stakeholders, leading to framing the challenge that will be addressed.



3. Shaping Solutions (Chapter 5): This is the stage during which new ideas for potential solutions will be crafted, again with ongoing engagement of target group and stakeholders.

These guidelines are designed primarily for members of WIN Innovation Groups, providing a clear roadmap for the development of social innovations that empower women in the Danube Region. However, the principles and practices outlined within the document hold broader value. Communities worldwide seeking to address social challenges through innovation can adapt this framework to suit their unique needs and contexts.



WIN

Chapter 1 - Integrating Lessons Learnt

In order to select the most adequate methodology for development of social innovations for improving the position of women in the labour market in peripheral industrial regions, an analysis of existing good practices from already implemented projects was conducted. The projects analysed were selected based on previous partners' project experience and expertise in the field of empowering social innovations in different contexts.

The projects which offered food for thought and inspiration are:

- AGRIGO4CITIES: Urban agriculture for changing cities: governance models for better institutional capacities and social inclusion, <https://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/agrigo4cities>
- SOCIAL INNOVATORS: International work-based learning programme for future social innovation practitioners, <https://www.social-innovators.eu/>
- AIM: Inclusive entrepreneurship education mentoring model, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ADUKT0p3CsJ_4lkGfEiWiHOkzHWwYhwb/view
- HoCare2.0: Programme aims to deliver highly innovative, digital based, customer-centered home care solutions for the elderly, <https://programme2014-20.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/HoCare2.0.html>
- ACTION FOR FUTURE: Utilizing design thinking in training and support for youth adults in risk, <https://actionforfuture.eu/>
- SIMRA: Social Innovation in Marginalised Rural Areas, <http://www.simra-h2020.eu/>



The target groups covered by reviewed projects represent diverse target groups in vulnerable position, including women, who face challenges linked to their labour market and social inclusion.

Overall, in projects reviewed there is a strong alignment with the principles and activities embedded in one of the most famous models for design and implementation of social innovations, the Social Innovation Spiral.¹



Stages of social innovation developed by Murray, Caulier-Grice, and Mulgan (2010)

In its essence, this model invites innovators to engage in a 6-step process, including understanding the situation in the given area, creative ideation, iterative prototyping, continuous monitoring, and scaling for wider impact. The main phases can be summarized as follows:

¹ Murray, R., Caulier-Grice, J., Mulgan, G. (2010). The Open Book of Social Innovation. London: The Young Foundation & NESTA.



- Prompts, Inspirations, and Diagnoses: Identifying societal challenges through indicators like performance, with a focus on creativity to tackle root causes.
- Proposals and Ideas: Generating solutions using methods like design thinking, emphasizing collaboration for innovation.
- Prototyping and Pilots: Testing ideas in smaller settings for adjustments, with an emphasis on learning and adapting.
- Sustaining: Developing sustainable structures, including governance and financial models, for long-term viability.
- Scaling and Diffusion: Expanding the reach through open-source and collaborative networks, requiring external financial support.
- System Change: Achieving broad societal changes through coalitions, evidence, and new norms, beyond individual innovations.

The highlighted stages of the Social Innovation Spiral will be embedded in all phases of the WIN project related to development and implementation of social innovations. This can be better visualized through the following table.

Tabel 1 - Social Innovation Spiral Stages in WIN project

Social Innovation Spiral Stages	WIN project phases
<p>1. Prompts, Inspirations, and Diagnoses: Identifying societal challenges through indicators like performance, with a focus on creativity to tackle root causes.</p> <p>2. Proposals and Ideas: Generating solutions using methods like design thinking, emphasizing collaboration for innovation</p>	<p>A2.1: Developing social innovations to improve the position of women in the labour market of peripheral industrial regions</p>
<p>3. Prototyping and Pilots: Testing ideas in smaller settings for adjustments, with an emphasis on learning and adapting.</p>	<p>A2.2: Testing social innovations to improve the position of women in the labour market of peripheral industrial regions</p> <p>A2.3: Reflecting social innovations to improve the position of women in the labour market of peripheral industrial regions</p>
<p>4. Sustaining: Developing sustainable structures, including governance and financial models, for long-term viability.</p> <p>5. Scaling and Diffusion: Expanding the reach through open-source and collaborative networks, requiring external financial support.</p> <p>6. System Change: Achieving broad societal changes through coalitions, evidence, and new norms, beyond individual innovations.</p>	<p>A3.1: Awareness-raising activities to improve the position of women in the labour market of peripheral industrial regions</p> <p>A3.2: Policy recommendations on improving the position of women in the labour market of peripheral industrial region.</p>



Most projects reviewed above are proposing methodologies for development of solutions linked to social welfare or are providing frameworks for training of diverse groups on co-creating and implementing these solutions.

There is a strong alignment with the principles of **human-centered design**, which invite embracing of bottom-up approach in innovation design, taking into consideration the needs and ideas of the target groups, but also the wide spectrum of stakeholders that are linked to a given social challenge.

Furthermore, they call for the creation of interdisciplinary teams that craft the idea for a solution and test it in the real environment.

In the following **comparative table**, there is a synthesis of the main phases, each project reviewed considers necessary for an effective innovation/solution development process.



Table 1 - Comparison of methodologies for ideas generations in the field of social innovation

AGRIGO4CITIES ²	Social Innovators ³	AIM project ⁴	HoCare2.0 ⁵	Action for Future ⁶	SIMRA ⁷
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnosis of the specific context, including social circumstance, stakeholder relationships, and spatial dimensions • Ideation for generating creative ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration research • Stakeholders' analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • Analysis • Brainstorming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-creation • Preliminary activities • Sharing • Exploration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel - observation activities (mapping and interviewing); • Imagine - crafting ideas of the desired future and solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify an issue • Motivate for support • Find a mentor • Team vision (shared values)

² Szalók, M., Bende, Cs., & Kozina, J. (Eds.). (2019). Participatory urban agriculture governance plan for fighting social exclusion in the Danube Region. Székesfehérvár: Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency. ISBN 978-615-00-4351-7.

³ Afrikanov, L., Dobрева, Y., & Bushnyashki, Y. (2019). Social innovations practitioner training programme: Trainers' guidelines. National Management School-Bulgaria.

⁴ Afrikanov L. & Paraskova G. (2023). Inclusive Entrepreneurship Mentoring Model: Manual, 1st Edition, Publisher: National Management School, ISBN: 978-619-92508-0-8

⁵ Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency Ltd. (2020, March). Final HoCare2.0 policy tool for co-creation of public health or social homecare services. Retrieved from <https://www.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/HoCare2.0.html>

⁶ Afrikanov, L., Coenen, S., Demmel, B., Eschig, S., Gröbner, A., Kronika, H., Lerchbaumer, S., Heeger, M., Kuyova, V., Molta, M., Lecchi, S., Quadri, F., Rutkowski, A., Schneider, D., & Tincman, P. (2021). Action for Future: Design Thinking in Adult Education – Trainers' Manual. Startklar Soziale Arbeit. ACTION FOR FUTURE Consortium.

⁷ Social Innovation in Marginalised Rural Areas (SIMRA). (2020). Social innovation: A practice guide. Brussels: SIMRA.



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From all projects reviewed the AGRIGO4CITIES provides the most comprehensive set of methods and tools to support development of social innovation process, such as Statistical Analysis, Survey, Participant Observation, 1-on-1 Interviews, A day in the life of, Cultural probes, Guided tours, Persona development, Stakeholder Matrix, Stakeholder Map, Participatory Mapping, Mind Maps, Moodboard, Mind Map, Problem Tree, SWOT Analysis, Lotus Blossom, MoSCoW, Harris profile, Storyboard, Future workshop, and Planning Groups⁸.

In other projects methods and tools that are linked to social innovations development and implementation are^{9,10}: framing the challenge; storyboard, idea sketch (visualizing solution); persona (understanding target groups through observation of daily routine and behaviour) – visualising the users; world café; exploration methods (desktop research, observations, empathy interviews with users; stakeholders' analysis (understanding the different actors that have link to the challenge we want to address); prototyping; action planning; collective brainstorming¹¹ (to explore different understandings of a subject and come to a common understanding and definition); 6-3-5 method; How-Wow-Now Matrix; Bodystorming; Fishbowl discussion.

⁸ Cunk, K., Straus, M., & Zamfira, R. (Eds.). (2017). Approaching urban agriculture as a social innovation: Guidelines for the development and implementation of an action plan. Koper: Association for Culture and Education PiNA.

⁹ AgriGo4Cities. (2017). Preparing for action planning: An account of the training session. Koper. Retrieved from https://dtp.interreg-danube.eu/uploads/media/approved_project_output/0001/14/daac744044601604f458b2e1694c405b8be8566b.pdf

¹⁰ Afrikanov, L., Dobрева, Y., Bushnyashki, Y., Cunk, K., Drobne, M., & Starčević, M. (2019). Social innovations practitioner training programme: Learning outcomes and syllabus. National Management School-Bulgaria.

¹¹ AgriGo4Cities. (2017). Preparing for action planning: An account of the training session. Koper. Retrieved from https://dtp.interreg-danube.eu/uploads/media/approved_project_output/0001/14/daac744044601604f458b2e1694c405b8be8566b.pdf



It was interesting to note that in one of the projects, there was an emphasis on introducing warm-ups when working with young adults in risks, before engaging them in a structured design thinking process¹².

In terms of evaluation criteria, the different projects^{13,14} apply to evaluate ideas generated, these can be summarized as follows:

- *The idea is useful for the people affected.* This is the heart of social innovation. The goal is to truly improve the lives of those facing a challenge. It's key to ensure the solution aligns with their genuine needs.
- *It is long-lasting.* Social innovation aims for enduring solutions, not quick fixes. The impact should be sustainable.
- *The idea is courageous/brave in nature.* Bold ideas are more likely to create transformative change rather than incremental improvements.
- *It is impacting the maximum number of people.* Maximizing reach expands the positive impact of the project, benefiting as many people as possible.
- *It is achievable by the implementation team.* While ambition is important, it must be aligned with realism.
- *It is easy to replicate.* An easily replicable solution can be shared and adapted by other communities, creating a ripple effect of positive change.

¹² Afrikanov, L., Coenen, S., Demmel, B., Eschig, S., Gröbner, A., Kronika, H., Lerchbaumer, S., Heeger, M., Kuyova, V., Molta, M., Lecchi, S., Quadri, F., Rutkowski, A., Schneider, D., & Tincman, P. (2022). Action for Future resource book for trainers using design thinking. Startklar Soziale Arbeit. ACTION FOR FUTURE Consortium.

¹³ Afrikanov, L., Dobрева, Y., & Bushnyashki, Y. (2019). Social innovations practitioner training programme: Trainers' guidelines. National Management School-Bulgaria.

¹⁴ Afrikanov, L., Coenen, S., Demmel, B., Eschig, S., Gröbner, A., Kronika, H., Lerchbaumer, S., Heeger, M., Kuyova, V., Molta, M., Lecchi, S., Quadri, F., Rutkowski, A., Schneider, D., & Tincman, P. (2021). Action for Future: Design Thinking in Adult Education – Trainers' Manual. Startklar Soziale Arbeit. ACTION FOR FUTURE Consortium.



The WIN Social Innovation Development Model will integrate a variety of elements from reviewed methodologies and tools taking into consideration the specific focus of partnership efforts, i.e. striving to ensure sustainable employment opportunities for women in peripheral industrial regions.



Chapter 2 - WIN Social Innovation Development Model

The methodologies used in other projects provide quality frameworks for the context they address. However, for the new challenge posed by the WIN project of improving the position of women in the labour market through social innovations, a more streamlined approach could be beneficial. Simplification can make the process more manageable and focused while still ensuring it captures the critical elements needed to understand and address the issue effectively.

Model's Stages

The WIN Social Innovation Development Model (WIN model) makes direct reference to the Social Innovation Spiral Stages highlighted in the previous chapter.

In the WIN model these stages are organised in two key phases, called Feeling the Change (identifying the challenge and its root causes) and Shaping Solutions (formulating ideas through design thinking process and interaction with target groups). The WIN model introduces an additional key phase, dedicated to the set-up of the WIN Innovation group. The full definition of the model's 3 phases can be further elaborated, as follows:

- Phase 1 - **Setting a WIN Innovation group**: the WIN Innovation group will be the driving force of innovation development in the respective peripheral industrial regions. 7 WIN Innovation groups are planned to operate and cover all targeted regions by the WIN project. They will represent diverse stakeholders ensuring the future solutions are tailored to the specific context from where they emerge.



- Phase 2 - **Feeling the Change**¹⁵: the WIN Innovation group will engage in observation and exploration activities to understand and make sense of the concrete issues faced by the target group, i.e. women in the respective peripheral industrial regions. The collected data will be matched with scientific and statistical analysis available and a choice of challenge to be addressed will be made.
- Phase 3 - **Shaping Solutions**¹⁶: the WIN Innovation group will formulate ideas for solving the challenge and check the usefulness of these ideas with target groups and other stakeholders. The final list of ideas to be implemented will also be evaluated for feasibility and sustainability potential. At the end of this stage, three or more ideas need to be implemented in the given region. From these ideas, they will select the ones to be further tested on the ground.

The model operates in a dual manner. It is both **linear and sequential**, where the outcomes of each stage shape the subsequent ones, and **reiterative or circular**, implying that during the process, there may be revisiting and reassessment of results from earlier stages.

For instance, during the ideation phase, members of the WIN Innovation group may discover new aspects of the chosen challenge or identify a more urgent and essential challenge. This might necessitate a return to the "Feeling the Change" phase to conduct further exploration and observation work.

¹⁵ Corresponds to Stage 1 from the Social Innovation Spiral: Prompts, Inspirations, and Diagnoses

¹⁶ Corresponds to Stage 2 of the Social Innovation Spiral: Proposals and Ideas



Model's Schedule

There's a broad range of approaches for determining the length of a social innovation development cycle. These can vary from short, intensive hackathons to multi-year, research-driven projects.

The WIN model seeks a balance, opting for a framework, providing WIN Innovation groups ample time to define the challenge and design impactful solutions.

- **Phase 1 - Setting a WIN Innovation group:** up to 5 months (May-September 2024), allowing for careful selection of members, adequate communication of the goals and objectives of their tasks and proper induction. Selection of WIN Innovation group members (May - June 2024); Preparation and Induction, including acquaintance with WIN projects research findings such as D1.1.1: Conceptual input paper on the position of women in the labour market of peripheral industrial regions (July - September 2024).
- **Phase 2 - Feeling the Change:** up to 2 months (October - November 2024), allowing for the WIN Innovation group's members to get acquainted with all additional to above WIN research data such such as D1.1.2: Comparative study on the position of women in the labour market of pilot regions and conduct their own exploration and observation activities, involving participant observation and individual or group interviewing of target groups and stakeholders.
- **Phase 3 - Shaping Solutions:** up to 2 months (December 2024 - January 2025), allowing for enough time for internal brainstorming and ongoing communication with target groups and stakeholders.



Chapter 3 – Setting a WIN Innovation group

The main goal of this stage is to establish a WIN Innovation group in each of 7 pilot regions in the current project. These groups will be the main driving force of development and testing of social innovations to improve the position of women in the labour market. They can be defined also as interdisciplinary collaborative teams who will be co-designing viable and sustainable solutions to local challenges.

Mission

The WIN Innovation groups drive change by fostering collaboration across diverse stakeholders to develop and implement innovative solutions for women's employment challenges. With a strong emphasis on sustainability and green initiatives, the Groups aim to empower women, promote inclusivity, enhance skills, and create connections within both traditional and emerging industries, ultimately leading to increased employment opportunities.

Mandate

- **Initiate and lead collaborative efforts.** Bring together people with different viewpoints to develop innovative solutions for the challenges women face in the labour market (e.g., unemployment, better working conditions, better work-life balance). Emphasize "green" initiatives that promote a sustainable economy and long-lasting jobs.
- **Help women develop essential skills and confidence.** Support women in gaining the knowledge and abilities they need to succeed in various industries. Include a specific focus on skills needed for environmentally friendly businesses and sustainable work practices.



- **Forge connections between businesses and women.** Facilitate partnerships that benefit both industries and women job seekers. Actively address concerns like unstable work conditions, unemployment, and women leaving the region for better opportunities.
- **Identify and address workplace barriers.** Uncover social or organizational practices that limit women's participation in the workforce. Work towards creating more inclusive and accessible workplaces for everyone.

The WIN partnership holds the ambition for WIN Innovation groups to remain active beyond the project's end. Provisions for membership renewal and ongoing support will be explored to ensure the longevity and impact of these groups. Also the future role and sustainability of WIN Innovation group can be further elaborated in the D3.2.1: Local/regional action plans as part of A3.2: Policy recommendations on improving the position of women in the labour market of peripheral industrial regions.

Membership criteria

Each WIN Innovation group will consist of at least 5 members representing 5 different institutions or natural persons, representing the target group of women in these regions.

Members of WIN Innovation group can be:

- women's associations;
- employers, business support organizations;
- multi-level public authorities;
- higher education and research organizations (academia)
- and the general public.



It is recommended that all members of the WIN Innovation group live or work in the targeted region. This ensures their connectedness to the specific context and challenges of the region and good understanding of the people they will interact with. However, individuals who demonstrate deep knowledge of the region's specific context, challenges, and needs, even if not physically based there, can also be valuable contributors. This is also valid for individuals that can bring potentially strong know-how in terms of possible solutions to be implemented on the ground.

Previous experience and know-how with the topic at hand (employment opportunities for women or other aspects of improving position of women in the labour market) should be considered as an advantage, but the main criteria to take precedence should be good understanding of the needs of the target group, good outreach to the target group and overall good communication skills.

Since the motivation behind WIN project is to ensure sustainability of solutions to be implemented (tested), it would be recommended that members of WIN Innovation group have the means in terms of their status and influence in the pilot regions to ensure sustained embedding of innovations developed.

Finally, considering the diverse opportunities for transnational exchange of good practice and experience between the 7 pilot regions it would be an advantage for the members of the group to have a good command of the English language.

Highlighted selection criteria can be summarized in the following selection checklist (see below).



WIN Innovation Group Member Selection Checklist		
Candidate Name:		
Instructions: For each criterion, please use the following scale: 3 - Exceeds expectations 2 - Meets expectations 1 - Needs improvement N/A - Not applicable		
Criterion	Score	Notes
Diversity: Represents a target group (Women, Women's Associations, Employers, Business Support Organizations, Multi-Level Public Authorities, Higher Education/Academia, General Public)		
Regional Expertise: Demonstrates strong connection to the region (lives/works in the region or possesses deep knowledge)		
Relevant Experience: Has worked on issues related to women's employment or improving their position in the labour market		
Outreach to Target Group: Excels in understanding and connecting with the project's target group of women		
Communication Skills: Demonstrates strong verbal and written communication abilities		
English Proficiency: Possesses a level of English fluency that enables participation in transnational exchange (if desired)		
Sustainability Focus: Shows the potential to influence and promote lasting solutions within the region		
Overall Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Score: Comments: 		
Recommended for WIN Innovation Group? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes No 		



Selection strategies

Considering the agreed-upon selection criteria outlined in previous sections, each partner responsible for a specific pilot region has flexibility in their approach to identifying WIN Innovation group members.

Internal nomination by partner staff may be suitable when staff have strong connections and can confidently vouch for potential members who meet the criteria. In this case, partners can create a list of nominees and evaluate them using the selection checklist.

Alternatively, an open call for members can be a valuable strategy to identify suitable candidates while simultaneously raising awareness of the WIN project's mission and objectives. The open call should clearly outline:

- Purpose and main tasks of the WIN Innovation Groups
- Benefits of membership
- Selection criteria
- Required application documents (e.g., CV, motivation letter)
- Declaration regarding the use of personal data for selection purposes

It is important to highlight in the open call that being a member of the WIN Innovation group is a voluntary position in service of the community.

Regardless of the strategy chosen, partners should be prepared to provide potential candidates with further information about all aspects of WIN Innovation Group membership.

Since the WIN Innovation group is a voluntary and at the same time long-term engagement, it might be expected that some of the initial members decide to step



down from their duties. To avoid blockage of the work process, selection of members can be conducted on an ongoing basis, when needed.

Main tasks and responsibilities

WIN Innovation group members will engage in a long-term process of developing and implementing social innovations. During their time of service, they will be engaged in a series of working meetings with individual or group assignments in-between. Depending on the concrete work stage, these assignments might involve interaction with different representatives of the target group, conducting participant observation, surveys, interviews, and short group discussions.

Coordination and monitoring

WIN Innovation group members are volunteers generously contributing their time and expertise. To ensure they can focus on developing solutions for women's employment challenges, assigning coordination and monitoring tasks to a dedicated representative of the responsible partner is recommended.

This coordinator will play a key support role by:

- leading group meetings (setting agendas, facilitating discussions, and ensuring effective communication), following agreed methodologies for developing, testing and evaluating social innovations;
- documenting activities (keeping detailed records of meetings, decisions, and progress made);
- monitoring Implementation (tracking activities to ensure they align with the group's mission, mandate, and agreed-upon schedule);



- communicating with other coordinators from other pilot regions (e.g., within A1.2:Transnational networking for more accessible, inclusive and effective integration of women into the labour market of peripheral industrial regions: Transnational workshops and study visits).

Induction

Induction contains two key aspects that can be summarized as follows:

- Preliminary communication. Through e-mail, the assigned coordinator of WIN Innovation group welcomes selected members and invites them for the 1st induction meeting. In this communication more information about the WIN Project and the importance of WIN Innovation group can be provided.
- Induction meeting. The first meeting is aimed to build common awareness on the importance of WIN Innovation group, build trust among members and foster their motivation and creativity. The meeting will provide opportunities for members to meet or if they already know each other to both closer, agree on the WIN group's forthcoming tasks, way of work and first immediate steps to be taken.

In order to conduct effective induction meeting, several recommendations can be taken into consideration, as follows:

- The coordinator of the group will need to make provisions so that the first meeting contains enough space and time (recommended time of min. 90 mins) for natural exchange between members, including some trust-building and ice-breaking activities.



- A good starting point for the meeting might be to provide space for each member to present oneself professionally, but also through sharing some more personal information (family details, favorite hobby, book or video).
- Following this part, participants can be invited to engage in a common activity to further create a positive and relaxed atmosphere.

Activity idea: Invite them to build a picture of the key values and principles for their future teamwork, using a deck of metaphorical cards (e.g., Dixit or simply images from magazines).

Each participant spends some time thinking about what values and principles of teamwork are important and then selects 2-3 corresponding images from the deck of cards.

Together the group tries to create one image out of all selected images that integrates all visions.

With the support of the coordinator, participants try to describe a list of teamwork values and principles looking at the big puzzle of images.

- After this warming up the coordinator makes a quick description of forthcoming tasks and engages members in a discussion on the proposed schedule, including the concrete work modalities to be employed (e.g., working meetings, assignments in between).
- In the final part of the meeting, communication of the Group's activities can be addressed. Ideally, members will agree to promote WIN project and its activities openly through both personal and professional communication channels.



- The meeting can be concluded with a group photo and scheduling the next meeting.

Schedule

The setup of the WIN Innovation Group involves two distinct stages:

- Selection of members: May - June 2024 (2 months). This involves identification of potential members or announcing open call for members. Assigning coordinator of the WIN Innovation group. Selection of members for the group on the basis of selection criteria agreed. Informing members for their selection and inviting them to an induction meeting.
- Preparation and induction: July - September 2024 (3 months). This involves acquaintance of members with their tasks and with research papers from WIN project, providing insights to the state of the art in each pilot region. During this stage (September) the induction meeting will be organised.



Chapter 4 - Feeling the Change

Overview

Following induction, the WIN Innovation group is ready to engage in the first social innovation development cycle, starting with the “Feeling the Change” phase.

The main objective of this phase is to collect and analyze information, which will allow for better understanding of the challenges linked with women’s employment and position in the labour market in the targeted peripheral industrial region.

In a **2-month period**, planned for this stage, the WIN Innovation group members will conduct data collection and analysis activities on the following levels:

- Internal level. This is linked to consolidating knowledge and perceptions on the topic linked to women’s employment and accompanying challenges that are already available within the members of the WIN Innovation group.
- State of the art. This is linked to reviewing WIN project’s research papers such as: D1.1.2: Comparative study on the position of women in the labour market of pilot regions and D1.3.1: Analysis of local/regional/national employment policies addressing women.
- Target group and stakeholders’ level. This is linked to collecting opinions from target groups and related stakeholders in the targeted region.

At the end of this stage, the WIN Innovation group will frame the concrete challenge or selected dimension of this challenge to be addressed and which will serve as a starting point for shaping viable and meaningful solutions.

Methods

The coordinator of the WIN Innovation group will invite members to engage in a series of working meetings, combined with in-between assignments, involving interaction with the target groups and stakeholders in the pilot region targeted.

During the *meetings* different approaches from projects highlighted in Chapter 1 to explore and inspire collective intelligence of the group will be employed such as focus group discussion, empathy/persona map, stakeholder matrix, challenge



framing. The overall intention will be to ensure the work process is emphasizing on dialogue and providing space for every opinion and suggestion. For the envisaged period of 2 months, the recommended number of meetings to be conducted (physical or virtual) is four.

During *in-between assignments*, along with tasks linked to review of data and its processing, members will be invited to engage into field work, which depending on the group's decision might involve conducting surveys, participant observation, group meetings and/or interviews with representatives of the target groups and related stakeholders. The recommended number of people to be reached through interviews or other forms of communication is min. 10. It would be recommended to ask people interviewed for their permission to be approached in the following months for additional communication related to the next phase of creating solutions.

Work plan

The presented work plan offers an indicative schedule of activities for implementation. Partners can choose feasible elements or combine activities (e.g., meetings, assignments) to ensure the engagement and participation of WIN innovation group members. It is important to ensure that the templates for Challenge frame is integrated in the work process.

Week 1-2

Meeting: 1st working meeting. Duration: half day.

Objectives: to collect members opinions and understanding of the “big” topic related to employment challenges of the women in region through a focus group; to share findings from WIN research papers (D1.1.2 and D1.3.1); to discuss what information is missing to get a clear picture on the situation and challenges related to women’s employment and how to collect it (survey, group meetings and/or interviews); to present and agree on Challenge frame to be used.

Challenge frame: The following elements can be included in the description:

- Title and definition (What is the problem we are trying to solve?)



- Positive change pursued (What is that we would like to achieve?)
- People involved (What are their needs and worries we would like to address?)
- System (What is stopping us and helping us to achieve our vision for change?)
- First thoughts of a solution (What might be the possible solutions?) This part is optional, and it is not the focus of this stage. Still, the practice shows that persons might generate a lot of ideas for solutions, which can be later used in the Shaping solutions stage.

Assignment: Each member conducts additional research on the topic at hand, reflecting on potential challenges and maps people from target group and stakeholders to be approached for interview or other form of communication. Coordinator tries to consolidate all data from the meeting in the Challenge frame.

Week 3-4

Meeting: 2nd working meeting. Duration: 90 mins.

Objectives: to exchange insights on additional data collected; to discuss potential persons to be interviewed; to check whether there is a stronger feeling for the direction of the positive change we would like to see happen; to connect more closely with target groups and stakeholders (persona map or other forms of visualization); to brainstorm potential questions to ask them.

Persona map: It brings the focus of the meeting on the core beneficiary of our efforts, i.e. women. This tool has different variations. For the current process, invite each participant to take a blank sheet of paper.

On the top as a title put the name of the starting problem / challenge. In the middle to put the name and age of a person from the target group with a simple drawing/sketch of that person. It can be a real person or a collective image of the target group as the participant sees it.

Next, invite participants to draw four quadrants (see image below) with the person's name staying as a centre and cross-section point. The goal is to write




down key answers that emerge from the perspective of the Persona on each of the questions.

Each participant presents his/her Persona.

All Personas can be stuck on the wall or somewhere to be seen along the meeting and can be brought to other meetings. This creates an atmosphere of being always connected to the people you serve.

Furthermore, telling the stories of the Personas brings forward elements from the big picture that might have been missed in previous reflection processes.

SAYS: What does she talk about the challenge?	THINKS: What is she worried/excited about?
<div>Person name, age and portrait </div>	
DOES: What are her daily activities?	FEELS: How does she feel on a daily basis?

Assignment: Members co-design questions to explore with target group representatives and stakeholders. Ongoing reflection on potential challenges and their underlying causes. Coordinator provides ongoing support and advice, including provision of a sample list of questions. Coordinator updates the Challenge Frame.

Week 5

Meeting: 3rd working meeting. Duration: 90 mins.



Objectives: to exchange ideas for questions to ask target groups and stakeholders; to design sample structure of an interview or group meeting; to agree on how interviews with target groups and stakeholders' representatives will be documented (protocol, photos, audio/video recording, etc.); to conduct demonstration of interview as a preparation for real life interviews or other communications.

Interviewing target groups and stakeholders: A successful interview extends beyond well-crafted questions; the environment and introduction play vital roles. A pleasant venue with ample privacy sets a comfortable foundation. Providing refreshments like water, coffee, and light snacks fosters a relaxed, conversational atmosphere conducive to candid responses.

Confidentiality is paramount.

Begin by assuring the interviewee that their responses will be used exclusively for research purposes, with complete anonymity guaranteed. Clearly articulate the WIN Innovation Group's mission to drive positive change for women in the region, emphasizing that their perspective is invaluable to achieving this goal.

Choose short, open-ended questions that encourage elaboration and prioritize a respectful, 30-minute timeframe.

During the interview, practice active listening and convey genuine interest through positive body language like eye contact. Follow up thoughtfully on their answers for richer insights. Express sincere gratitude for their time and contribution.

Finally, seek permission to contact them again during the Shaping Solutions phase of the project, demonstrating respect for their continued involvement.

Group meeting: If the WIN Innovation group opts instead of interviews to conduct meetings with target groups and stakeholders, this will require adopting a different approach. While all recommendations made above regarding the interview like creating a welcoming atmosphere, selection of a nice venue for the meeting, confidentiality, open questions and others are relevant, it is important to highlight several additional guidelines to have in mind.



As a group experience, there is a risk for some of the participants to be louder and not give the opportunity for others to speak their mind. That's why it is important to set clear rules and introduce order and timing of opinion expression (e.g., everyone gives their reply in 3 mins).

The overall timing should not exceed 60 mins and the meeting should end with open invitation for a next one during the Shaping Solutions phase.

Week 6-7

Assignment: WIN Innovation group members conduct interviews or group meetings with target groups and stakeholders to collect their opinions and perceptions of the issue at hand. This task can be implemented in pairs, so that one person takes detailed notes and the other leads the communication. Ongoing discussion of results and insights from interviews and trying to map the real challenges and obstacles the target group is facing. Coordinator provides ongoing support and advice.

Week 8

Meeting: 4th working meeting. Duration: half day.

Objectives: to present insights from the interviews and other communication conducted with target group and stakeholders; to formulate common patterns; to formulate vision for positive change aligned with target group's needs and understanding; to select challenge/obstacle to be addressed in the following phase of Shaping the Solutions; to validate the challenge selected using the following criteria: it is manageable; it is realistic to approach; the WIN Innovation group can contribute to its solution.

Assignment: Coordinator consolidates all data from the meeting in a new version of the Challenge Frame. The Frame is sent to the WIN Innovation group for final review, comments and agreement.

Outputs expected

- Challenge frame ready, providing clear definition of the problem to be addressed and the positive change pursued.



WIN

- Members of the WIN Innovation group reach agreement on the direction to be followed.
- The opinion of target groups and stakeholders is well taken on board throughout the whole process.



Chapter 5 – Shaping Solutions

Overview

Following the Feeling the Change stage and with a clear understanding of the needs and obstacles faced by women in the peripheral region addressed, the WIN Innovation group is ready to engage in the Shaping Solutions phase.

The main objective of this 2-month phase is to inspire WIN Innovation group members to generate meaningful and viable solutions in support of women employment. The solutions will be validated through interaction with the target group and stakeholders' representatives.

At the end of this stage, the WIN Innovation group will have formulated three or more ideas to be implemented in the given region. From these ideas, they will select the ones to be further tested on the ground.

Methods

Stepping on existing methodologies, outlined in Chapter 1, the coordinator of the WIN Innovation group will invite members to engage in a series of working meetings, combined with in-between assignments, involving interaction with members of the community in the region targeted.

During the meetings different approaches to inspire ideation and co-creation spirit of the group will be employed such as creative brainstorming, visual representations, simulations. The overall intention will be to ensure the work process is emphasizing dialogue and providing space for every opinion and suggestion. For the envisaged period of 2 months, the recommended number of meetings to be conducted (physical or virtual) is four.

During in-between assignments, along with tasks linked to reflection on ideas for viable solutions, members will be invited to engage into field work, which depending on the group's decision might involve conducting group meetings and/or interviews with representatives of the target groups and related stakeholders to check their opinions on ideas created. The recommended number of people to be reached through interviews or group meetings should be min. 10.



It would be recommended to engage the same people that were involved in the previous stage.

Work plan

The presented work plan offers an indicative schedule of activities for implementation. Partners can choose feasible elements or combine activities (e.g., meetings, assignments) to ensure the engagement and participation of WIN innovation group members. It is important to ensure that the template for the Solution frame is integrated in the work process.

Week 1-2

Meeting: 1st working meeting. Duration: half day.

Objectives: to confirm the validity of the Challenge frame from previous stage and if needed update it; to provide a quick description of the characteristics of a good solution (human-centred: linked to needs of target group and stakeholders; adding new elements to existing solutions or providing totally new solution; provides sustainable effect and adds value to the whole community); to brainstorm for first ideas of good solutions, taking into consideration the initial ideas put forward by the WIN project for each peripheral region addressed; to present and agree on Solutions frame for describing ideas to be used.

Initial ideas for solutions from WIN project:

- HU: Focus on enhancing women's entrepreneurial skills and developing gender-sensitive financial and business services;
- AT: Establishing a women's network to articulate the needs of the female workforce;
- BG: Creating a social innovation incubator to promote women's business ideas;
- RS: Fostering digital education through intergenerational dialogue;
- CZ: Implementing activities to increase women's self-confidence;



- BIH: Providing training and skills development for unemployed women;
- SI: Offering life empowerment and career guidance programs with innovative services to empower young women and mitigate out-migration trends.

Brainstorming: To ensure that every member's idea is heard, it is recommended to conduct this activity in two stages.

Stage 1 – Every member is invited to formulate up to 10 ideas for solving the challenge;

Stage 2 – The group reviews all ideas, clusters them and votes for the 5 most preferred ideas. Before actual brainstorming starts, it might be a good idea to do a short warm-up creative activity (e.g., Think of 100 ways to restore nature).

Solution frame: The following elements can be included in the description of all potential solutions: Title of the social innovation; Aim; Targeted region; Short summary of the social innovation; Main implementation activities; Expected results; Impact (short and long-term); Sustainability and Scalability.

WIN Innovation group members can use the following template with helping questions to draft their descriptions:



WIN Innovation Solution frame
Title of the social innovation: (Concrete and inspiring) ...
Aim: (What positive change do we aspire for?) ...
Target group: (Who are we serving to?) ...
Target region: (Where will be implementation?) ...
Short summary of the innovation: (1-2 sentences description, which catches the essence of the idea proposed) ...
Main implementation activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity 1: (Short description of the activity, duration, resources and responsible persons) • Activity 2: • Activity 3: • ...
Expected results: (How many people will benefit from our innovation? In what way? Example: number of people informed, trained, received job placements, salaries raised; number of services introduced; campaigns conducted; job-fairs,,,...) ...
Impact: (What short and long-term effects do we see if we achieve our expected results?) ...
Sustainability and Scalability: (What is the potential of our innovation to be transferred to other regions and also to go beyond regions and reach national and/or European level?) ...

Assignment: Coordinator consolidates all ideas collected using the Solutions frame proposed. Ideally, min. 5 Solutions frames will be designed. Members are asked



for ongoing feedback on these ideas and encouraged to share if any new solutions emerged following the meeting.

Week 3-4

Meeting: 2nd working meeting. Duration: half day.

Objectives: to revisit solutions drafted and check, if they need to be updated or a new solution to be added to the list; to create visual prototypes of selected solutions; to try telling the story of each solution using the prototype.

Prototyping: This is the process during which participants take the text description from a Solution frame and think of ways to visualize it ("to make it alive") so that it is easier to understand how it works. Timewise, it makes sense to split participants in pairs, each pair being responsible for 1-2 solutions.

The prototypes they create can be in the form of drawings (sketches), mind maps, comics and the so-called 3D sculptures. The 3D sculptures are usually built from assorted recycled materials.

Whatever visualization is chosen, the testing question should be: Does it help us to tell the story of our solution, so that our target groups (women) can understand it better? If the answer is YES, then the process is going in the right direction.

Storytelling: Participants should be encouraged to think when presenting their prototypes that it is like presenting a product on the market. People are coming and going, not having much time to listen and you must "sell" them your product, among so many others.

In summary, the story should be very straightforward, emphasizing how the solution works and what is the added value for the target group and stakeholders.

Assignment: Members continue working on their prototypes and their stories, preparing themselves for showing them to target groups and stakeholders. Coordinator provides ongoing support and advice.

Week 5

Meeting: 3rd working meeting. Duration: 90 mins.



Objectives: to check whether Solutions frames need updating; to agree on how interviews or group meetings with target group and stakeholders' representatives will be documented (protocol, photos, audio/video recording, etc.); to make a rehearsal of the story telling in front of target groups and stakeholders.

Week 6-7

Assignment: WIN Innovation group members conduct interviews or group meetings with target groups and stakeholders to collect their opinions and perceptions on the proposed solutions. This task can be implemented in pairs, so that one person takes detailed notes and the other leads the communication. Ongoing discussion of results and insights from interviews and trying to confirm their approval of solutions proposed or concrete ideas how to improve them or add new ones. Coordinator provides ongoing support and advice and presents if requested during group meetings.

Week 8

Meeting: 4th working meeting. Duration: half day.

Objectives: to present insights from the interviews and group meetings conducted with target group and stakeholders; to discuss which are preferred solutions by target group; to take a decision on which ideas will be implemented in the following phase.

Taking decision on solutions to be implemented: It is recommended to use the following criteria to decide which ideas will move to the next phase of implementation: The idea is useful for people affected; It is long-lasting; The idea is courageous/brave in nature; It is achievable by the WIN Innovation group; It is easy to replicate.

Assignment: Coordinator updates Solution frames for the selected solutions for implementation and sends to members for review and final comments.

Outputs expected

- Solution frames to be implemented ready.



WIN

- Members of the WIN Innovation group reach unanimous decisions on which solutions to move to the implementation phase.
- The opinion of target groups and stakeholders is well taken on board throughout the whole process.



Chapter 6 - Reporting and Communicating Success

Each coordinator of a WIN Innovation group must prepare a final report. This report should reflect on the progress and achievements during the three key phases highlighted in the guidelines: Setting Up a WIN Innovation Group, Feeling the Change, and Shaping Solutions.

The report should describe the strategy used by coordinators of WIN Innovation groups in implementing the current guidelines, especially if they have used an individualized approach.

The report should highlight the success of the WIN Innovation Group in producing key expected outputs, including:

1. Setting Up a WIN Innovation Group:

- Ensure the group complies with the selection criteria and methods outlined in the current guidelines (minimum of 5 members per group).

2. Challenge Frame:

- Prepare a clear definition of the problem to be addressed and the positive change sought (one frame per region).

3. Solutions Frames:

- Design at least 5 ideas for social innovations to be developed during the envisaged period.
- Select at least one solution frame to be tested in the next phases of the WIN project.

In the report, coordinators should also provide an overview of:

- The level of agreement among members of the WIN Innovation group on the direction to be followed.
- The extent to which the opinions of target groups and stakeholders were considered throughout the process.

To support the report, coordinators should collect evidence such as photos from meetings, attendance lists/screenshots, audio, video, and any other materials developed during the process.



Coordinators can use the collected evidence for ongoing communication with target groups and stakeholders, keeping them informed about the progress. For instance, after each meeting of the WIN Innovation Groups, coordinators can publish short updates (photos and brief texts). This will maintain ongoing awareness and engagement with the activities of the WIN Innovation Group, ensuring sustainable interest for future phases.

WIN Developing Social Innovations Timeline

WIN

	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24				Nov-24				Dec-24				Jan-25			
						Week-1	Week-2	Week-3	Week-4	Week-1	Week-2	Week-3	Week-4	Week-1	Week-2	Week-3	Week-4	Week-1	Week-2	Week-3	Week-4
Setting a WIN Innovation group																					
Selection of Members																					
Preparation and induction																					
Feel the Change phase																					
1st working meeting: Challenge frame																					
Collecting information about Challenges and mapping target groups and stakeholders to																					
2nd working meeting: Persona maps and																					
Design questions for interview or group meetings with target groups representatives and stakeholders																					
3rd working meeting: Communicating with target groups and stakeholders																					
Interviews or group meetings with target groups and stakeholders on Challenges																					
4th working meeting: Challenge frame ready																					
Shaping Solutions phase																					
1st working meeting: Solutions frame																					
Collecting ideas for Solutions																					
2nd working meeting: Prototyping and Storytelling																					
Design prototypes and stories of selected Solutions																					
3rd working meeting: Communicating with target groups and stakeholders																					
Interviews or group meetings with target groups and stakeholders to collect their opinions and perceptions on Solutions																					
4th working meeting: Solution frames selected and ready																					
WIN Innovation Groups' Coordinator Reports																					