



EASI - EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION PROGRAMME
NOVA – NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE APPROACHES TO SOCIAL AND LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS.

INNOVATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

New cooperation modes and new ways of delivery of services in the national context (Serbia)

SCALE AND TYPE OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

- Incremental and Process Innovation

CALL NAME

Establishing and testing integrated interventions aimed at supporting people in (the most) vulnerable situations

COUNTRY

Serbia

POLICY AREAS

Combat long-term unemployment
Fight against poverty and social exclusion

TARGET GROUPS

National, regional and local authorities
Employment services
Social partners
NGOs

COORDINATOR

Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia

CO- BENEFICIARIES

National Employment Services of Serbia
Centre for Social Policy
ISM Strategic Marketing
The Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia
Serbian Red Cross

EU CONTRIBUTION

€ 1,004,014 (80% of the total costs)

TOTAL COSTS

€ 1,255,017 (estimation)

DURATION

December 2021 - May 2024

SUMMARY OF THE ACTION

The ultimate goal of the NOVA project is to help vulnerable groups in Serbia improve their position, boost their employability, and better integrate into society. Through integrative techniques and new alliances of multiple actors, the project's particular goal is to decrease obstacles to social services and labour market access for Serbia's most disadvantaged populations. With the project implementation, those in the most vulnerable situations will gain sufficient resources and adequate income for life in dignity.

NOVA project will identify and test effective support measures for unemployed persons from vulnerable groups, based on robust data gathering and sharing of good practices with peers from EaSI countries. This will be achieved by promoting improved access of the most vulnerable groups to the labour market; applying a specific activation mix and providing specific measures of individualized support. The project will also develop a strategy for model replication and scaling up, including developed proposals for policy improvement.

Keywords: vulnerable groups; disadvantaged populations; multistakeholder partnerships

In the Republic of Serbia (2.28 million people), 34.3 percent of the population is in danger of poverty or social exclusion. This figure is much higher than the EU's 28-country average (21.7 percent). Approximately 40% of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion have a mix of two or three risk factors, such as unemployment, high informal employment, a weak educational background, and gender-based discrimination, to name a few. Such combinations have a substantial impact on the most disadvantaged people's circumstances, their access to education, social services, labour markets, and general social inclusion.

“The project intends to stimulate cooperation between the most important stakeholders in social protection. The only way we saw to do this has been through EU funding and EaSI, in particular, which was a perfect fit for what we wanted to do”

OBJECTIVES

01

- Use of integrative techniques and new multistakeholder collaborations to remove obstacles to social services and labour market access for Serbia's most disadvantaged populations.

02

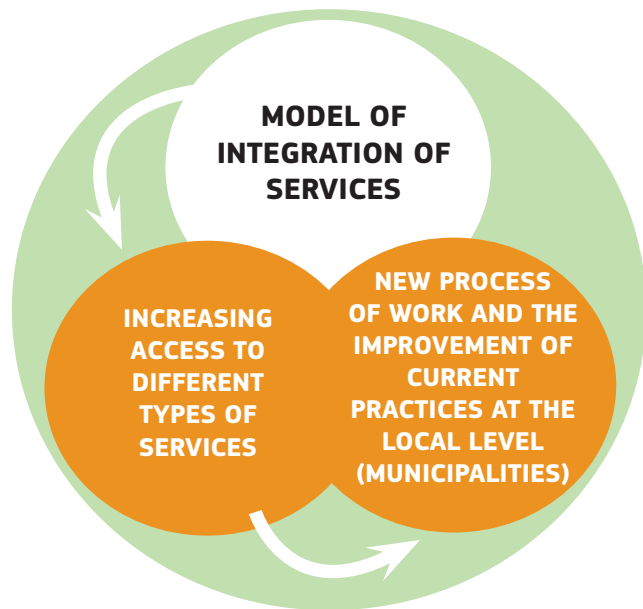
- Increase the labour market access and employment status of the most disadvantaged populations.

03

- Improve the use of existing public support measures in the fields of employment and social protection, as well as local-level measures to promote cross-sectoral cooperation, thereby improving coordination between stakeholders in social protection, employment, and other relevant fields.

CONTEXT AND NEEDS

- 1 REPETITIVE NATIONWIDE REPRESENTATIVE SURVEYS
- 2 A GROUP OF 300 SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS AND 100 CONTROL GROUPS PARTICIPATING
- 3 AN ETHNOGRAPHIC INVESTIGATION



The project uses the model of integration of services for the target groups based on gradual reforms, which also considers the limited administrative capacity in the national context. The model is focused on increasing access to different types of services and encompassing key phases in policy development. The methodological approach includes a proposal for a new process of work and the improvement of current practices at the local level (municipalities).

The project team have planned an assessment procedure based on comprehensive survey work with disadvantaged groups/households to assess the project’s progress during implementation. They intend to carry out three sorts of evaluation activities in particular:

- Repetitive nationwide representative surveys
- A group of 300 social assistance recipients and 100 control groups participating in repetitive sample surveys.
- An ethnographic investigation

RESULTS

The initiative has only been initiated in early 2022, therefore no data on the intervention’s effectiveness is now available.

“The project wants to address generational poverty. This is where the most vulnerable groups are to be found, the ones inheriting poverty from generation to generation.”

“The project intends to stimulate cooperation between the most important stakeholders in social protection (i.e.: national employment service, our ministry, the best researcher company, etc.).”

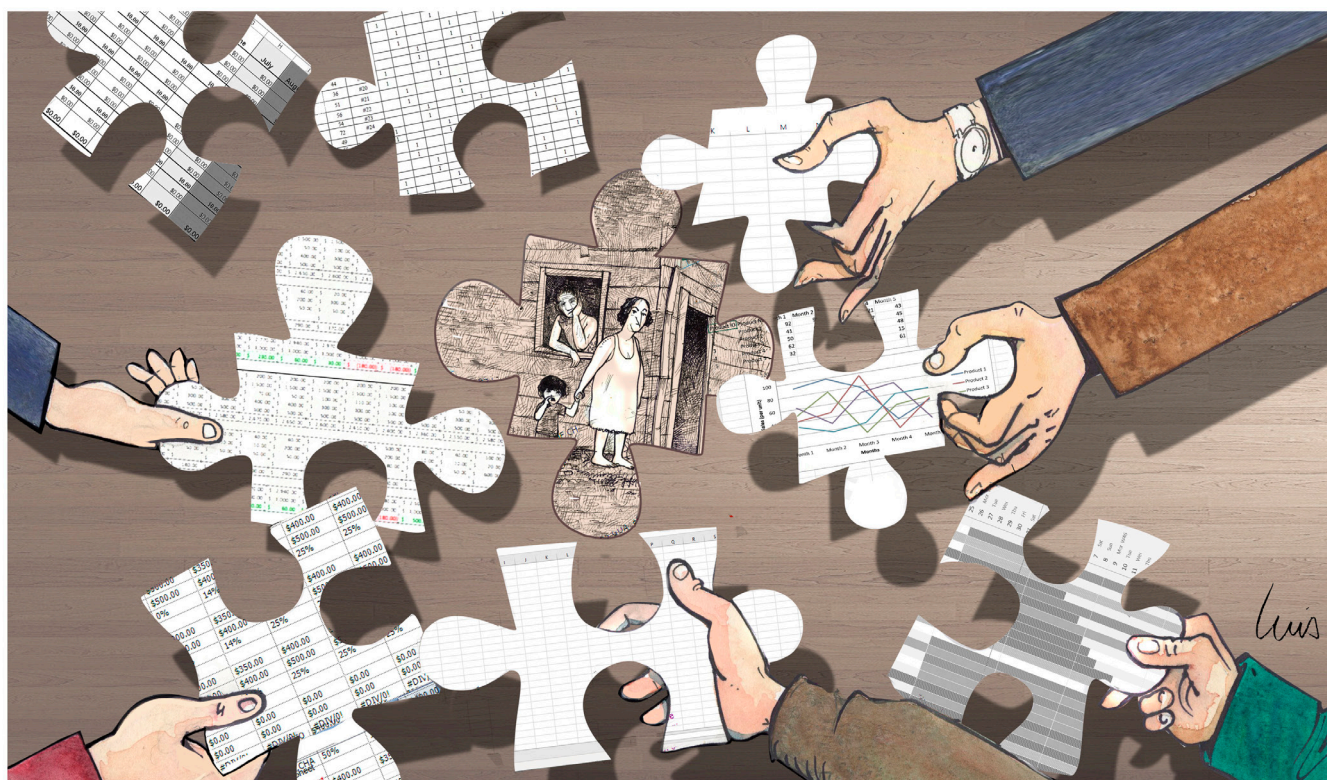
“It will be created through local bodies in participating municipalities that will gather relevant stakeholders and address the needs of the target group individually”

The project's creative content is mostly focused on new modes of cooperation and new ways of delivering services in the national context (Serbia). In terms of the new mode of collaboration, the proposed project aims to connect current initiatives in Serbia at the local level and coordinate them at the national level. In the participating municipalities, the project team plans to establish local bodies. These entities will bring together important parties and address the needs of certain target groups.

The national coordinating institution will also contribute to the exchange of experiences and best practices among these local institutions. In terms of the innovative manner of delivering services, the project offers a first-of-its-kind comprehensive approach to addressing the requirements of target group members as well as developing individual activation plans in Serbia.

TRANSFERABILITY AND UPSCALING

Given the early stage of project execution, there are no clear transfer plans as of early 2022. However, as part of the project deliverables, the research team hopes to build a complete dissemination and mainstreaming plan. They hope to be able to generate demand for their services (e.g. by asking beneficiaries to advocate for the model to be implemented in their local communities on a broader scale) by publicising the stories of target group recipients). In addition, the project team will take advantage of the fact that policymakers are participating in project activities in order to mainstream and, finally, entrench the outcomes at the national level.



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PROJECT CANVA



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