



## **Short description of the Project PLUS (Politicians Listening to Us)**

This text or part of it has been published after the approval of the proposal by the European Commission, the Executive Agency and the National Agency in Spain, in all their publications. This is also included in the publication platform for the program Erasmus+

The text shows in a brief and concise way: context, antecedents, objectives, number and profile of participants, description of activities, methodology, results, expected impact, and benefits in a long term.

The Three Cultures of the Mediterranean Foundation based in the Spanish city of Seville gathers in the PLUS (Politicians Listening to Us) project a consortium of European countries and southern Mediterranean neighbours represented by youth associations and NGOs that work directly with young people. Together they comprise the PLUS project, an initiative under key action 3 of the Erasmus+ programme based on structured dialogue – dialogue between young people and policy-makers.

The emergence of new political parties as alternatives to traditional governance groups is evidence of young people's readiness to take part in decision-making at local, regional and national administrative level, despite absenteeism in electoral processes. Different social movements working toward change in both East and West have become a vote in favour of alternative policies as a possible solution for an economic and social situation marked by major hardships. Young people's willingness to engage is paralleled by greater involvement with a view to creating a better world, raising social and environmental awareness and promoting solidarity, thereby fostering social entrepreneurship to counter unemployment and job insecurity. The social economy has proven to be the formula resulting in the lowest jobless rate in recent years throughout Europe and occupies a priority place on the future agenda of European institutions.

The group of PLUS project participants comprises 50 young people from 20 to 30 years old with diverse educational backgrounds. They are clearly committed to dialogue with policy-makers at various levels, thus showing their willingness to achieve consensus to help create a better society for all. Analysis of the steps taken by Eurozone governments and neighbouring Mediterranean countries regarding social enterprise will serve to put forward a series of

recommendations while also helping achieve growth of the social economy as an alternative with huge possibilities.

Each partner plays a vital role in selecting the participants and coordinating prior activities that will take place in each country of origin in the first phase, as well as subsequent actions. The participants grouped by countries carry out tasks involving research about the social economy to frame the context so that a survey of policy-makers can later be conducted at different levels. All information will be pooled during one week in July 2016 in Seville, Spain, highlighting examples of successful social enterprise initiatives in each country. That work will be accompanied by visits to major local and regional political landmarks such as the Andalusian Parliament and the City Hall of Seville, the capital of Spain's largest autonomous community, providing an opportunity to converse with decision-makers. They will also meet with internationally-renowned political scientists at Pablo Olavide University. The activities will alternate with references to European instruments, with emphasis on multilingualism and creative thought.

This international meeting will serve to pool information on social enterprise gathered beforehand in order to produce a document of recommendations accompanied by a video, translated into various languages and distributed by available media outlets to reach other young people and especially policy-makers in different countries, including those that did not participate as partners. The work will be presented at major gatherings such as European Youth Week and other forums of interest. Among the benefits is enhanced awareness of social enterprise as a real and possible alternative for young people, here envisaging the creation of jobs through the inclusion of partners from other countries. The participants will continue to actively collaborate in the project's blog ([tresculturas-plus.blogspot.com](http://tresculturas-plus.blogspot.com)) with contributions that update and enrich the conclusions on an ongoing basis.

