**The Third Way** is an Erasmus Plus KA2 project with partners from Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the UK that started in 2019. It was developed to improve communication and knowledge sharing between the vocational and higher education sector and social enterprises (The so-called Third Sector). The project has the **primary aim** to create innovative and accessible learning programmes that support understanding and awareness of social enterprise. At the heart of the project proposal is the development of a new curriculum pathway for students from business subjects wishing to become social entrepreneurs and/ or create or work within social enterprises.

The curriculum devised will be available in digital form such as a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) or through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) via a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) as well as delivered as innovative face-to-face programmes of study. The project proposal supports the development of new curricular pathways through a process of knowledge sharing and communication.

The project proposal was devised during a workshop at the Businet conference in Vilamoura, Portugal in November 2017 and includes Businet as a partner. It has the **broad aim** of narrowing the divide in understanding between traditional business curricula in Vocational and Higher Education and the growing sector of social enterprises. While across Europe more and more young people are turning to social enterprises, the Third Sector, this partnership is keen to recognise this and support and inform their choices and lead them towards this ‘Third Way’ of doing business.

The university partners will work with social enterprises and aspiring social entrepreneurs to produce a curriculum model and MOOC that offers information about social enterprise, for social enterprise and provides learning through social enterprise. As well as the MOOC, the devised curriculum will stand alone as a ‘Face to Face’ programme of study delivered via a series of interactive workshops. This project represents a serious attempt to ensure social enterprise becomes an integrated component of the higher education business curriculum. It will also support the social enterprise sector to recruit from a pool of graduates and trainees with the required sector-specific skills and knowledge.

An essential outcome of the project proposed is knowledge sharing and the potential for access to greater mobility across the EU alongside the formal recognition of the proposed lifelong learning, which again this project will bring about. New initiatives in the business curriculum will support models for social businesses and will be generated through this proposed initiative.

Currently, the partnership is working on developing the curriculum and the underlying MOOC structure. The curriculum structure has been developed after a survey of social enterprises that had 228 respondents and also involved two face-to-face focus groups. It will include ‘modules’ that deal with Leadership, Project Management, Funding & Tendering, Marketing, Finance Management, Governance and Business Strategy. Once the curriculum is developed, the final task is to support a thematic network and pan-European internships within social enterprises for undergraduates.