



European
Development

European
Development
Foundation

Activity Report 2025

A comprehensive overview of our
achievements and impact

Growth and development
travelyment



TO
Stakeholders and
Partners

PRESENTED BY
The EDF Team

A Year of Progress and Purpose



A year of impactful actions and initiatives for change



In 2025, the European Development Foundation (EDF) strengthened its role as a catalyst for social innovation, inclusion, and gender equality, with a particular emphasis on empowering women and girls across Europe.

EDF moved beyond delivering projects—it helped shape opportunities, amplify voices, and open doors for those too often left behind.

Aligned with European priorities on gender equality and social inclusion, the Foundation delivered impactful programmes in:

- Women's empowerment and entrepreneurship
- Digital inclusion for vulnerable groups
- Education, culture, and youth development

The year marked a strategic shift toward gender mainstreaming across all activities, reflecting broader EU efforts to combat inequality and violence against women and to promote women's participation in society.



Building Inclusive Futures

Our mission focuses on creating opportunities for all, prioritizing **social inclusion** and equality to ensure that every individual can thrive and contribute positively to society.

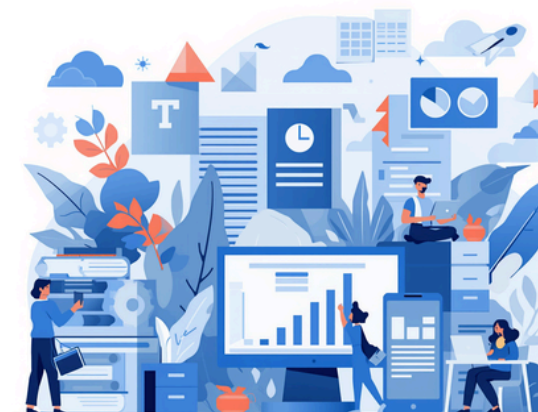


In 2025, the Foundation further strengthened its **strategic positioning** in the field of gender equality through its active role as a Board Member of LetHerIN from 6 years. An international network dedicated to advancing women's empowerment, leadership, and inclusion across Europe and beyond.

The network now consists of **46 members from 22 countries**. This role enabled EDF to contribute to shaping joint initiatives, fostering international cooperation, and amplifying the impact of women-focused programmes.

In short, our core mission:

- Support sustainable social development and education
- Promote culture, creativity, and innovation
- Facilitate social integration of vulnerable groups, including women, youth, and people with disabilities



Key Achievements in 2025

Empowering Women: From Participation to Leadership



In 2025, EDF deepened its commitment to women's empowerment by moving beyond access-based participation toward sustainable leadership pathways. The Foundation actively supported women not only as beneficiaries, but as decision-makers, innovators, and community leaders.



This shift was reflected in the design of programmes that integrated:

- Leadership development modules, including communication, negotiation, and strategic thinking
- Peer-learning environments, where women exchanged experiences and built confidence collectively
- Mentorship and role-model engagement, connecting participants with experienced women leaders across sectors



Key Achievements in 2025

Empowering Women: From Participation to Leadership



EDF also prioritised intersectionality, recognising that women's experiences are shaped by overlapping social, economic, and cultural barriers. As a result, programmes were adapted to support:

- Women from rural and underserved communities
- Women re-entering the labour market
- Women balancing caregiving responsibilities



The impact of this approach became visible through:

- Increased female participation in entrepreneurship and innovation initiatives
- Greater confidence in digital and professional environments
- Emerging women-led initiatives and local community actions



By embedding leadership at every level, EDF contributed to a broader transformation—where women are not only included, but actively shaping inclusive and sustainable futures across Europe.

LetHerIn Events

Empowering Women Across Europe



In 2025, the European Development Foundation actively participated in the LetHer In Events, dedicated to empowering women, promoting gender equality, and fostering female leadership and entrepreneurship.

EDF's Contribution on the events:

- Representation in panel discussions and networking sessions focused on women's empowerment
- Sharing of EDF's good practices and project results in the field of gender equality and inclusion
- Engagement with European stakeholders, NGOs, and women leaders to exchange experiences and build partnerships
- Promotion of EDF initiatives supporting women in entrepreneurship, digital skills, and social inclusion



Empowering Women Across Europe

Key Themes Addressed:

- Women's access to innovation and digital opportunities
- Overcoming barriers to female entrepreneurship
- The importance of mentorship and support networks for women
- Gender equality in education, employment, and leadership

Impact and Outcomes:

- Strengthened visibility of EDF as an active contributor to women-focused initiatives in Europe
- Established new connections for future collaborations and projects
- Enhanced knowledge exchange on effective approaches to empowering women and girls
- Reinforced EDF's commitment to integrating gender equality across all activities

Annual Networking Event



held on the 9–10
January 2025
Setúbal, Portugal



The LetHerIn

International Network held its annual networking event in Setúbal, Portugal, bringing together over 50 participants from 18 countries.

The event included thematic workshops and expert panels and discussions on social inclusion, gender equality, and community development. Some of the key results were the exchange of good practices among partner organizations, presentation of ongoing initiatives and project results and generation of new project ideas and partnerships.

The event strengthened international cooperation and enhanced the capacity of participating organizations to address gender equality and inclusion challenges.



International Networking Event



held in Konya,
Turkey,
on the 22–23 July
2025.



The event gathering organizations and experts from across Europe and beyond.

Main focus areas were upcoming funding opportunities and project calls, development of new project ideas and partnerships and innovation in youth work and social inclusion.

Some of the activities were thematic discussions and working groups, exchange of good practices and identification of key challenges, including gender and cultural barriers.

The event contributed to expanding the partnership network and fostering the development of new collaborative initiatives aligned with the project's objectives.



Social Inclusion & E-LOCUM

In 2025, the European Development Foundation made significant strides in promoting social inclusion and enhancing access through our E-LOCUM initiative.

This program targeted marginalized communities, providing them with essential digital skills and resources. Through a series of workshops and community events, participants were empowered to navigate the digital landscape confidently.

The emphasis was on fostering an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive, regardless of their background.



Key partnerships with local organizations facilitated outreach efforts, ensuring diverse participation. The success of these programs was evident in the positive feedback received from participants, highlighting increased confidence and improved employability.

As we move forward, the focus remains on sustaining these efforts, expanding our reach, and fostering a culture of inclusivity within the community.

This approach not only enhances individual lives but also strengthens society as a whole, creating a more equitable future for all.

EUCA event



In 2025, the European Development Foundation participated in the second networking event organised by EUCA – European university college Association, held in Porto on 23–24 October 2025.



The event brought together organisations, experts, and stakeholders from across Europe, providing a dynamic platform for knowledge exchange, partnership building, and project development. The programme included thematic workshops and discussions focused on European funding opportunities such as Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and Digital Europe.

EDF's participation in the event included:

- Engagement in expert workshops and thematic sessions on education, digital innovation, and capacity building
- Exchange of good practices and experiences with European partners
- Exploration of new project ideas and funding opportunities
- Strengthening connections within European networks focused on youth, education, and inclusion



EUCA event



The activity contributed to enhancing EDF's capacity to:

- Develop innovative, cross-border initiatives
- Strengthen its role within European cooperation frameworks
- Expand its network of partners for future project



By participating in this event, EDF reinforced its commitment to collaborative learning, international cooperation, and the development of impactful European projects, aligning with its strategic priorities in education, digital transformation, and social inclusion.



Education, Training & Digital Inclusion

Opening Doors Through Digital Skills and Innovation



In 2025, EDF positioned education and digital inclusion as key drivers of empowerment, employability, and social participation.

Recognising the accelerating pace of digital transformation, the Foundation expanded its efforts to ensure that no group is excluded from emerging opportunities, particularly in areas such as artificial intelligence, digital communication, and online entrepreneurship.

Key areas of action included:

- Development of digital training programmes, tailored to beginners and advanced learners
- Integration of AI and innovation topics into educational initiatives
- Accessible learning environments, adapted for people with disabilities and diverse learning needs

International Week of the Deaf 2025

The European Development Foundation is a partner organization in the celebration of the International Week of the Deaf 2025 (22–28 September, Bulgaria). It also actively participates in marking the International Day of Sign Languages, which forms an integral part of this global initiative.

Through its involvement, EDF contributed to raising awareness about the rights, inclusion, and full participation of Deaf individuals in society, while promoting accessibility and equal opportunities in education, employment, and community life.

Key contributions and activities included:

- Awareness-raising campaigns and outreach initiatives, highlighting the importance of sign languages as a fundamental human right and a key component of cultural identity
- Support for inclusive events and community engagement, bringing together Deaf individuals, organisations, and the wider public
- Promotion of accessibility in education and digital environments, advocating for inclusive learning tools and communication platforms
- Collaboration with local and international partners, strengthening networks working in the field of disability inclusion



International Week of the Deaf 2025

EDF placed a particular emphasis on the intersection between digital inclusion and accessibility, recognising that technological innovation must be inclusive by design.

Efforts were made to:

- Encourage the use of accessible digital tools and resources
- Promote inclusive communication practices, including the use of sign language interpretation
- Support the development of skills and opportunities for Deaf individuals in digital and professional environments

Participation in this initiative reinforced EDF's broader mission to advance the rights of people with disabilities, while contributing to a more inclusive society where diversity is recognised and valued.

By engaging in the International Week of the Deaf, EDF strengthened its commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and equal participation, ensuring that Deaf communities are not only represented but actively involved in shaping inclusive futures.





Digital Learning Initiatives

Our programs focus on promoting **digital literacy** among underrepresented communities, empowering individuals with essential skills to thrive in the digital world and enhancing their overall opportunities.



Digital Story telling Webinar



As part of its activities in the field of education, training, and digital inclusion, the European Development Foundation organised and promoted the Digital Story for Impact final event on the 3rd of December via Zoom, bringing together partners, stakeholders, and participants involved in the project.

The activity focused on presenting the main results and outputs of the initiative, including digital storytelling tools, training materials, and examples of content developed by participants. It provided a space for knowledge sharing and exchange of experiences, highlighting how storytelling can be used to communicate social impact more effectively.



Alina Ionela Bîrsan

I have been working in the last ten years in the non-governmental field, which means a very dynamic work environment, with a lot of learning opportunities.

I am the coordinator of "Mamele citesc" NGO, with a ten years experience in the administration and coordination of more than 20 European financed projects. My vision is a world where children and parents read together and spend less time watching their televisions and phones.

Since 2011, I have been working in the non-governmental sector, as project manager, communication expert, training coordinator, but also as an administrator of a social economy network with over 50 members from Europe and Asia.



Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+ Project Digital Storytelling Skills for Social Enterprises

No: 2024-1-NL01-KA210-ADU-000254862



Educational needs analysis of social enterprises in the Netherlands and Bulgaria

Svetla Tagareva, EDF, Bulgaria



Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+ Project Digital Storytelling Skills for Social Enterprises

No: 2024-1-NL01-KA210-ADU-000254862

Digital Story telling Webinar



During the event, participants:

- Explored practical applications of digital storytelling in social and sustainable enterprises
- Engaged in discussions on innovative communication approaches and audience engagement
- Reviewed project achievements and shared feedback on the developed resources

The activity contributed to strengthening participants' digital and communication skills, while also increasing awareness of the importance of storytelling as a tool for visibility, advocacy, and social change.

Through this event, EDF supported the dissemination of project results and reinforced its commitment to using digital innovation to empower organisations and communities across Europe.

Key competence trainings



Within the framework of Programme BG05SFPR002-1.006 “Starting a Job”, Component 2 “Training”, the European Development Foundation implemented face-to-face training activities focused on Key Competence 5 (KC 5):

Personal competence, social competence and competence for acquiring learning skills, with a specific emphasis on the development of teamwork skills among unemployed individuals.

The training sessions were designed to strengthen participants' ability to communicate effectively, collaborate in diverse teams, manage interpersonal relationships, and develop adaptive learning strategies. Special attention was given to practical exercises that foster cooperation, conflict resolution, active listening, and problem-solving in group settings—skills essential for successful integration into the labour market.



Key competence trainings

The activities were carried out in two locations:

- Momchilgrad, during the period 20–24 October 2025
- Dzhebel, during the period 19–23 January 2026

Both training sessions were delivered in a face-to-face format and engaged unemployed participants in interactive learning environments that combined theoretical input with experiential learning methods, including group work, role-playing, and case studies.

A total of participants from the target groups took part in the training, gaining valuable competences that enhance their employability and readiness for the workplace. The initiative contributed to improving participants' self-confidence, motivation for lifelong learning, and ability to function effectively in team-based professional environments.

Through these activities, the European Development Foundation supported the development of essential transversal skills, contributing to better labour market integration and promoting active participation in social and professional life.



EUROPEAN PROJECTS



Co-funded by
the European Union

An abstract background on the left side of the page, featuring overlapping translucent geometric shapes in shades of blue and white, with thin blue lines and dots suggesting a network or digital theme.

The European Development Foundation continued to expand its impact in 2025 through active participation in a diverse portfolio of European projects. These initiatives reflect EDF's commitment to fostering innovation, inclusion, and capacity building across key areas such as digital transformation, entrepreneurship, and social integration.

By working collaboratively with international partners, the Foundation contributed to the development of practical tools, training resources, and sustainable solutions. Each project represents a strategic step toward empowering communities and strengthening inclusive growth across Europe.



EYE4AI – Empowering Young Entrepreneurs through AI



The EYE4AI project focuses on equipping young people with essential artificial intelligence and entrepreneurial skills to support the creation and growth of innovative businesses, while fostering cooperation, innovation, and the ethical use of AI.

In 2025, the European Development Foundation actively contributed to the project by participating in key initiatives, including the celebration of International Girls in ICT Day (24 April 2026), where it promoted women's participation in digital and technology careers. Additional activities included the development of an e-learning platform and digital library, the creation of training programmes and AI-focused learning materials, and the establishment of a network of young entrepreneurs and stakeholders.



Through these efforts, the project is expected to contribute to the emergence of a new generation of AI-skilled entrepreneurs, enhance innovation and competitiveness in the business sector, and build a sustainable European network and knowledge ecosystem for AI-driven entrepreneurship.

Learning to Live



The Learning to Live project aims to enhance the autonomy and digital competences of people with disabilities, while also strengthening the capacities of professionals, caregivers, and families who support them.

In 2025, the European Development Foundation contributed to several key activities and outputs, including the development of a Procedural Help Guide—a practical tool designed to assist people with disabilities in managing daily administrative tasks. The project also implemented dissemination and engagement activities across Europe, including newsletters and events such as Newsletter #2 (April 2026), which presented project results, tools, and impact.



More than 180 beneficiaries participated in project activities and testing phases. Additional efforts included the creation of training resources for professionals and caregivers and the exchange of knowledge and tools among partner countries. Through these actions, the project is expected to increase independence and quality of life for people with disabilities, strengthen support systems, and contribute to more inclusive and accessible services across Europe.

Story for Impact – Digital Storytelling for Social Impact



The Story for Impact project is designed to strengthen the digital storytelling capacities of social and sustainable enterprises, enabling them to communicate their mission and impact more effectively.

In 2025, the European Development Foundation contributed to a range of key activities, including training and capacity-building initiatives where participants developed skills in creating compelling narratives and digital content. The project also included dissemination and awareness campaigns (March–April 2026), which highlighted progress and engaged broader audiences, as well as final-stage activities in 2026 focused on sharing results and best practices across Europe.



These efforts significantly improved participants' storytelling and communication skills while increasing the visibility of social enterprises at a cross-border level. In the long term, the project is expected to support a stronger digital presence and outreach, enhance engagement with stakeholders, and generate sustainable impact through improved communication and advocacy capacities.

MoMs – Models of Mentoring for Migrant Women



The MoMs Project aims to support the social and economic inclusion of migrant women by strengthening mentoring practices and empowering both mentors and mentees across Europe. The project focuses on improving access to employment, education, and community participation by equipping migrant women with key skills, confidence, and guidance through structured mentoring programmes.

In 2025, the European Development Foundation contributed to several important activities and outputs within the project. These included the development of innovative mentoring models tailored to the specific needs of migrant women, as well as practical tools and guidelines to support mentors, organizations, and stakeholders working in the field of integration. A core achievement was the creation of training materials and capacity-building resources aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of mentoring relationships.



Through these actions, the MoMs project is expected to enhance the employability, independence, and social inclusion of migrant women, while also reinforcing the capacities of organizations and communities to provide effective and sustainable support systems across Europe.

Partnerships and

Collaboration



Nurturing Growth

Collaborating fuels our
shared vision for success.

Synergy and Impact

Our network continues to expand,
fostering strong relationships that
enhance our mission and drive
impactful outcomes across
diverse initiatives.





In 2025, partnerships remained at the core of EDF's work, enabling the Foundation to scale its impact, exchange expertise, and co-create innovative solutions across Europe.

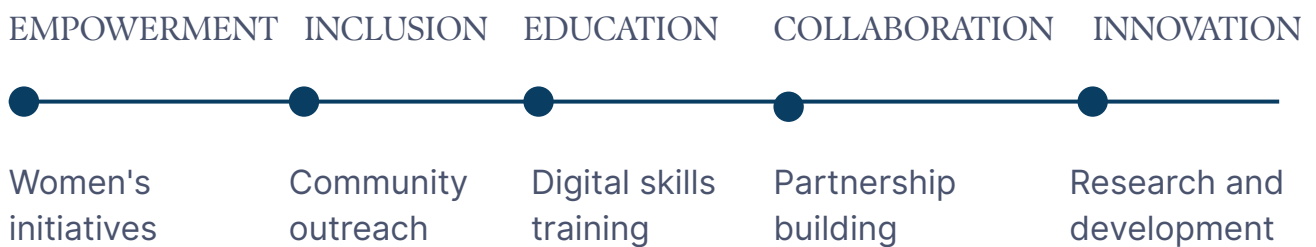


EDF strengthened and diversified its network by collaborating with:

- Civil society organisations and NGOs
- Educational and research institutions
- European networks focused on gender equality, inclusion, and innovation
- Public and local authorities engaged in social development

Strategic Priorities for 2026

Charting the Future for Sustainable Development Goals



In 2026, the European Development Foundation is committed to advancing its mission through key strategic priorities that align with our vision for sustainable development.

Empowerment will focus on enhancing women's participation in various sectors, ensuring that their voices are heard and valued.

Our **inclusion** initiatives aim to reach underserved communities, promoting equity and access to resources.

We will invest in **education** by providing digital skills training that prepares individuals for the evolving job market.

Furthermore, our emphasis on **collaboration** will foster stronger partnerships with stakeholders and community organizations, driving impactful change together.

Lastly, our commitment to **innovation** will support research and development projects, ensuring that our solutions remain effective and forward-thinking. By aligning these priorities, we aim to create a lasting impact that resonates with our community and stakeholders.



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www.eu-dev.eu

eudevelopmentngo@gmail.com

