

Joint Strategy on 3Ps to support Social and Solidarity Economy

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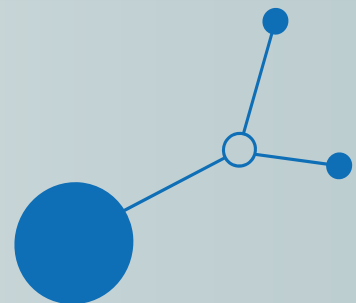


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1. TECHNICAL AND THEMATIC ASPECTS OF SOCIAL ECONOMIES IN CENTRAL EUROPE

1.1. THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

The concepts of social economy and solidarity economy have developed over time in close relation, although not overlapping. Depending on historical phases and geographical areas, one or the other has prevailed depending on whether the emphasis was more on the entrepreneurial dimension (social economy) or the social justice dimension (solidarity economy). Recently, particularly within the United Nations, these two concepts have been treated together. Since the 2014, United Nations integrated both categories, by defining the Social and Solidarity Economy as a broad set of organisations and enterprises that are specifically geared to producing goods, services and knowledge, while pursuing economic and social aims and fostering solidarity. With this respect, considering the increasing global challenges, the International Labour Organisation argues as Social and Solidarity Economy seems to be pivotal for advancing 2030 Agenda¹. Social and Solidarity Economy can be conceived as a dynamic force to move societies towards the paradigm shift called for in the 2030 Agenda and to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals. This position was further reinforced by the UN General Assembly, which on 18 April 2023 passed the resolution 'Promoting the social and solidarity economy for sustainable development' recognising that the social and solidarity economy can contribute to the realisation and localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At the European level, the EU Commission in December 2021 approved an important Action Plan for the social economy, which was followed by the European Council Recommendation of November 2023 with the aim of promoting the adoption of national-level strategies for the development of the social economy. In the EU strategy, which is framed in the European Pillar of Social Rights, the just transition can be achieved considering the Social Economy as fundamental driver. With this regard, Social Economy entities, able to employ about 13.6 million people in the EU², are considered one of the main cornerstones of the twin transition, as putting the primacy of people and the planet as their main goal³. Specifically, the Social Economy can foster the implementation of the principles of the European Pillar for Social Rights and the 2030 headline targets, contributing to the digital and green transitions, supplying sustainable goods and services and filling the social gaps emerging from the single market enlargement processes⁴.

1.2. THE EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK ON SOCIAL ECONOMY

According to the European Union Action Plan on Social Economy, the term Social Economy refers to four main types of entities providing goods and services to their members or society at large, including cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations, foundations, and social enterprises. By adopting the European Union Action Plan on Social Economy, EU Commission, also by virtue of the mandate it derives from the European statutes, accentuates the entrepreneurial dimension, absorbing into it the demands and motivations that also find expression in the idea of solidarity economy.

1 UNTFSSSE, Social and Solidarity Economy and the Challenge of Sustainable Development. A Position Paper by the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (TFSSSE). June 2014. Geneva, Switzerland.

2 Figure covering the EU-28. See European Economic and Social Committee, Monzon, J. L., Chaves, R., Recent evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union, 2017, p. 66.

3 COM(2023) 316 final.

4 EU Commission, Building an economy that works for people: an action plan for the social economy. December 2021.

In November 2023, the European Council promulgated a recommendation on developing the Social Economy framework conditions at national scale and then among Member States⁵. In the scope of the Council recommendation, it is possible to see confirmed the integration of both concepts (Social Economy and Solidarity Economy). The conceptual contribution drives to advice Member States about the economic potentials of Social Economy towards sustainable development paradigm. In concrete terms, the recommendation fosters the access to the labour market and social inclusion by encouraging the adoption of policy and regulatory frameworks for the Social Economy and promoting the measurement of impacts and advancements. Within this context, the European Council makes evident as the Social Economy may constitute a critical driver for the local development and territorial cohesion.

In general terms, therefore, considering both the dynamics at world level (UN, ILO, OECD) and those at European level (EU Commission, EU Council), the social and solidarity economy today, also in the light of the economic and social crises that have occurred over the last fifteen years, is increasingly seen as an approach that may contribute to promote spatial and development convergence, connecting public authorities, market and non-market economic activities. Moreover, Social and Solidarity Economy may drive to the creation of a new developmental model able to take together the three spheres, framing them into a broader vision, consistent with a mutualistic and shared perspective⁶. Finally, in the scope of governance aspects, the active engagement of the Social and Solidarity Economy may empower the public sphere, mitigating the risk of isomorphism of the public sector⁷. A new and still untapped potential is constituted by the synergies between the public sector and Social Economy Organisations which are nested in the social fabric of local communities⁸. Social and Solidarity Economy is strictly associated with public sphere⁹, naturally nurtured by civil society, which plays a fundamental role in developing the social economy ecosystems. A vibrant civil society supports the societal demand for accountability and participation, endorsing the promotion of participatory agenda in the policy decision-making. In these terms, social economy organisations act within the context of subsidiarity principles with public authorities, by pursuing general interest goals, in conditions of parity and autonomy that of public administration.

1.3. THE TERRITORIAL BACKGROUND IN CENTRAL EUROPE

As illustrated within the context of the Central Europe Programme, although important progress towards the regional convergence, the economic and social differences between “Eastern” and “Western” countries in the programme cooperation area are still visible. In the 10 most developed NUTS3 regions, the average GDP per capita is about nine times higher than in the 10 least developed regions¹⁰. In addition, some regional gaps with respect of 2030 Sustainable Development Goals show how unbalances among people and places delineate the presence of deep disparities. ESPON programme illustrates how EU regions perform with respect to 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, making evident the territorial dynamics and the potentials for the development of the regions (NUTS 2). In this regard, life expectancy at birth in “Eastern” Europe

⁵ C/2023/1344.

⁶ Sacchetti, S., Borzaga, C. & Tortia, E. C. (2023). The institutions of livelihood and social enterprise systems, *Forum for Social Economics*, 52:3, 282-297.

⁷ Sacchetti, S. and Salvatori, G. (2023). “Shared Administration” as a New Relationship between the Public Sector and the Social Economy, *Euricse Working Paper Series*, 126/2023.

⁸ Salustri, A. et al. (2023). The role of shared administration in overcoming territorial polarisation processes, *Euricse Working Paper Series*, 131|23

⁹ The notion of the public sphere needs to be considered in political terms, as key category of participatory approaches. The public sphere is conceived as the arena where citizens exchange opinions regarding public affairs, discuss, deliberate, form public opinion and eventually organise themselves.

¹⁰ C(2022) 1694 final. INTERREG CENTRAL EUROPE PROGRAMME 2021-2027. Adopted in March 2022.

still remains under the 80 years, whereas in “Western” countries this is steady over this threshold. Secondly, huge differences persist on the percentage of people living in an overcrowded dwelling, illustrating some criticalities in Poland regions (such as in Dolnośląskie and Zachodniopomorskie, respectively 42.83% and 45.66%) and Croatia (46.78%) in the period between 2014 and 2016.

With respect to this territorial characterisation, it must be noticed that the same territorial disparities within regions are widening, especially between thriving ones and the less advanced ones, leading to new territorial and social cleavages¹¹, proven by different distribution of social wealth, and human capital (EUROSTAT 2019). Moreover, the programme recognises that inequalities are increasing among places and people, implying unsustainable development dynamics, which have reached a critical level. The polarisation of social and territorial dynamics, driving to regional divides, may be associated with the engagement of communities in developmental policy, bridging the gap between public sector and market¹². Shared models grounded on the theoretical basis of collective and/or general interest and then cooperative developmental paradigm may contribute to put in practice public actions, especially thanks to the strict collaboration based on public-private spheres.

1.4. THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN CENTRAL EUROPE: GLOSSARY AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS

3P4SSE project grounds the conceptualisation of Social and Solidarity Economy as encompassing a diverse range of entities with different business and organisational models that prioritise societal purpose, including social and environmental goals, over profit and maximising the collective and general interest. This aim results in the achievement of positive social and/or environmental externalities, throughout the production, distribution and consumption of commodities, whose value chains are driven by the principles of primacy of people, mutuality, solidarity, autonomy and participatory governance. Social Economy Organisations can contribute to create employment in traditional sectors by providing quality and stable jobs, promoting the integration of disadvantaged workers and supporting the transition from informal to formal employment¹³.

According with the contextualisation of Social and Solidarity Economy, several impact areas were emerged among partners. On the one hand, traditional cooperation areas on social inclusion-related services were highlighted in most cases. Around the employment and inclusion belongs to a common and shared understanding about the creation of employment opportunities, particularly for marginalised and vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities, the long-term unemployed, and individuals, facing social exclusion. Second, with reference to the impact area related to the welfare and social inclusion, it was pointed out the promotion of social integration of individuals at-risk of social exclusion, by participating to the provision of general interest services (i.e. social housing) and implementation of informal initiatives of social inclusion, like within in culture and creative sector, practice of voluntary work and sports activities, etc. On other hand, the case studies identified a second range of impact areas, concerning environmental sustainability and local development. The first dimension concerns the promotion of environmental sustainability and eco-friendly practices, contributing to the preservation of natural resources, the protection of the environment, and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles.

11 Rodríguez-Pose, A. (2018). The revenge of the places that don't matter (and what to do about it). *Cambridge journal of regions, economy and society*, 11(1), 189-209.

12 Borzaga, C., Salvatori, G., & Bodini, R. (2019). Social and solidarity economy and the future of work. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and innovation in emerging economies*, 5(1), 37-57.

13 Borzaga, C., Salvatori, G., & Bodini, R. (2019). Social and solidarity economy and the future of work. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and innovation in emerging economies*, 5(1), 37-57.

Regarding the second impact area, it was highlighted the attention for the development of peripheral and marginalised territories, with the empowerment of communities living in.

Social and Solidarities Economies are constituted mainly by Social Economy Organisations, identified as those private entities (independent from public authorities), putting at the centre the primacy of people over profit, pursuing both social and environmental purposes, reinvesting most of their profit in activities, finalised to the collective and general interest, managed according to participatory governance. Considering the thematic contextualisation, several supply-chains of Social and Solidarity Economy were identified, emphasising the role of economic business models and paradigms with reference to the several impact areas. First, inclusive business models envisage social integration of disadvantaged groups of people, labour reintegration and vocational training. Fair trade includes the promotion of commercial relations aimed to foster local economies in developing countries, in order to achieve equitable and sustainable trade relationship, respecting environmental and social standards. Circular economy and environmental services aim to promote positive impact on environment, relating to the reuse, reprocess and the promotion of resources efficiency, including greening measures and eco-friendly initiatives. Moreover, Social business services concerns the production and delivery of services addressed to third sector organisations, with the aim to improve their capacity or assets, including digital services. Social agriculture promotes inclusive, participatory and generative model of agricultural practices that deliver recreational, educational and assistance services. It must be noticed that the above-mentioned list is not exhaustive as new front-economy in social and solidarity dimensions could comprehend new sectors and supply chains, such as the cultural enterprises and the urban regeneration.

1.4.1. THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS: THE REGIONAL MATURITY MODEL

Central Europe countries and regions show an asymmetric state, displaying different degrees of maturity. The Institutional Maturity on Social Economy measures the formalisation throughout Acts of social economy elements (composed in social economy, social entities, social clusters). Differently, the institutionalisation of cooperativism consolidates the role of cooperatives as those actors able to transform the informal social economy, into a recognised form of economy, pursuing solidarity and mutual purposes. The year of adoption of Cooperation Acts provides information about the recognition of cooperativism, contextualising the culture of the cooperative model with a country-specific trajectory. Especially in Eastern countries, the progression of cooperativism in the normative framework seems to be partially other-directed or influenced by the process of accession among EU member states¹⁴. Moreover, the cooperative model is able to interpret the differences among Central Europe countries, as in the case of countries with a socialist past, the cooperativism is still affected by strong cultural biases stemming from a history in which cooperatives were an emanation of state organisation.

In Central Europe countries, the diverse path-dependent trajectories about Social and Solidarity Economy have been deeply influenced by the diverse institutional approaches, encompassing both welfare systems, in which Social Economy Organisations were integrated, and the social innovation sphere. **Institutionalised Social Economies** identify those contexts where the Social Economy is legally framed and defined at national and/or sub-national scales, including social entrepreneurship as well. Moreover, **Institutionalised Social**

¹⁴ After the fall of the Soviet Union, this legacy for several Eastern European countries necessarily led to a turn towards organisational models other than those of traditional cooperation.

Economies illustrate the presence of formal and informal territorial cooperation able to foster local social economy ecosystems. **Mature Social Economies** identify those contexts where Social Economy has not been legally defined yet and cooperativism is associated with the gradual implementation of European Union enlargement policy. Conversely, **Mature Social Economies** illustrate a lively national or regional context, with a solid definition of social organisations and Social Economy ecosystems are encouraged by public policies. **Growth Stage Social Economies** identify those contexts illustrating a strong tradition with regards to the existence of cooperative social fabric and welfare systems. On the contrary, this typology does not show a specific attention about the formal adoption of Social Economy acts and a clear national Social Economy framework seems to be still largely missing. **Early-stage Social Economies** identify those contexts where the legal definition of Social Economy is still missing, and the presence of public-private partnerships and territorial cooperation is rare. Moreover, in **Early-stage Social Economies** the formalisation of cooperativism was adopted in conjunction with the formal integration in the European Union.

1.5. THE POLICY SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

In February 2018, the European Commission launched the European Social Economy Regions Initiative, with the aim to raise awareness about Social Economy at regional and local level, encouraging the creation of networks of Social Economy stakeholders. Secondly, the Initiative promotes the development capacities for a targeted inter-regional collaboration between Social Economy partners.

In this context, the Joint International Strategy aims to strengthen Social and Solidarity Economy among Central Europe regions by promoting Social Economy Clusters, based on public-private partnership scheme. Overall, Social Economy Clusters are intended both as formalised and non-formalised forms of territorial cooperation, set-up by Social Economy Organisations and Public Authorities, aimed to maximise the social impact and minimise the costs due to the production, distribution and consumption of commodities.

Social Economy Clusters may be constituted formally by more than two organisations throughout network contracts, Public-Private Partnership agreements, or other forms of contractualization referring - for example - to the management of specific economic resources. Social Clusters in Europe vary in terms of size and format. They are at different stages of maturity and national, regional and local governments manage diverse cluster development programmes or policies. Among the typology of Social Economy Clusters, it is possible to list:

- **Entrepreneurial clusters:** the term is borrowed from the economic geography, conceptualising the agglomeration economy, which exploits the comparative advantage to foster solidarity economy. Entrepreneurial clusters promote the employability of disadvantaged populations (i.e. disabled persons) within a specific territorial area, local development and the sustainable development agenda. In these particular cases, public-private partnerships are included as well.
- **Networks:** formal or informal territorial networks in Social Economy aimed to pursue different goals (advocacy, social inclusion, cooperation, capacity building, etc.). As mentioned by the European Commission, the main goal of networks is to create societal wealth and jobs through reinforced networking of Social Economy Organisations already present on a specific territorial area.
- **Platforms and hubs:** platforms, umbrella organisations, hubs of Social Economy aimed to create a supportive ecosystem, incentivising networking, promoting capacity building, research and

innovation, visibility and knowledge, referring to a general territorial area (i.e. national context) or with specific territorial reference.

- **Social clusters:** formalisation of cooperation in Social and Solidarity Economy through public-private partnership forms of collaboration (defined as agreements including both public sector, third sector and private sector), intended to foster the subsidiarity in a territory and to develop policy programmes.

According to both the institutional/policy contexts and the state of maturity in Social and Solidarity Economy, different barriers emerge with respect to the development of regional Social Economy ecosystems, jeopardising the setting of local/regional partnerships and territorial collaborations. First, cultural barriers persist in all categories of case studies, where Social Economy Organisations are generally not considered as complementary in reaching economic goals, inasmuch as they internalise social and environmental costs. This situation envisages a lack of trust by investors, as the Social and Solidarity Economy is considered a public resources-dependent sector and because of the profit distribution, which make the Social and Solidarity Economy as structurally unattractive. Second, within the context of more mature Social Economies, especially financial sustainability relates to the economic maintenance of a Social Economy Organisation partnerships. In this case, the costs referring to make sustainable a supra-organisation may drive a renounce of stakeholders to set (and formalise) a territorial collaboration. Notwithstanding more mature countries and regions prove to have consolidated the ecosystems related to Social Economy, the internalisation of further costs due to the formalisation of a territorial network must be justified properly, taking into account that Social Economy Organisations already internalise social and environmental costs.

The absence of a clear institutional framework such as the lack of a legal definition of Social Economy may hamper the creation of supporting infrastructures, able to trigger innovation processes among Social Economy Organisations, like Innovation Hubs and collaborative platforms. In this context, higher economic risks due to the lack of proper background infrastructures may induce Social Economy Organisations to maintain an unstructured and fragmented state. The same situation seems to occur when policy barriers are detected. In less mature countries and regions, the lack of a coherent policy agenda on Social and Solidarity Economy hampers the opportunity to increase grant programmes to support Social Economy Organisations. In all case studies, fragile policy agenda on Social and Solidarity Economy may affect negatively the consolidation of a long-term vision. Especially the policy programming is deeply affected by the willingness, stability and long-term vision of public authorities to design the supportive policy environment.

2. THE JOINT STRATEGY

2.1. THE VISION OF THE STRATEGY

Project Partners recognise the pivotal role of social economy to accomplish the sustainable development goals and promote the local development, by fostering social economy ecosystems and clusters at regional and local scales.

Project Partners recognise the paradigm change, moving from a conceptualisation of the social economy restricted to the mere social inclusion towards that one of social innovation, intended as that activity that is considered as socially embedded, both in its ends and in its means. Specifically, the policy agenda with

reference to social innovation encourages the activation of social proactive dynamics, aimed to fully integrate the disadvantaged social groups at all societal levels and offer a renovated developmental paradigm, able both to compete in the market and pay attention to the social, economic, and environmental challenges. Moreover, social change is driven by digitisation and technological transformation, stimulating the introduction of new services for local communities and the aggregation of interests.

Project Partners aim to strengthen the Social and Solidarity Economy among Central European regions by building ecosystems, through networks, clusters, platforms, and umbrella organisations. Specifically, Pilot Partners will define, throughout creating collaborations with public authorities, territorialised policy agendas, framed in Local Action Plans, designed by participatory methods which embrace capacity building programs, financing schemes, business model improvement, promotion and advocacy measures, making the most of existing policy tools such as GBER, SGEI, social procurements, fiscal policy.

2.2. THE POLICY OBJECTIVES

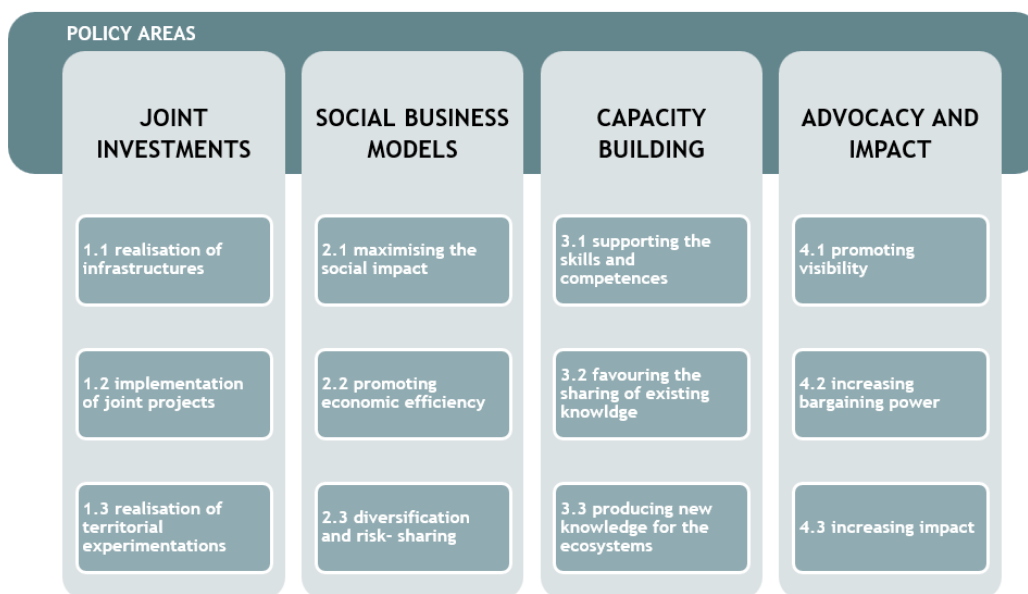
According to a place-based approach, the International Policy Strategy intends to favour the creation of supportive social economy ecosystems by several policy objectives:

- (i) encouraging - in the diverse contexts - the raising of the collective awareness and territorial common vision about modes of cooperation among relevant stakeholders and therefore creating the pre-conditions to foster the setting of social economy clusters with a public-private partnership perspective (i.e. promotion of the autonomy and parity of social economy organisations that of public authorities in decision-making in the social economy);
- (ii) formalising the creation of the social economy clusters throughout the collaboration between public authorities and private sphere, including social enterprises, non-profit organisations and business sector;
- (iii) ensuring the commitment among participant organisations, endowing social economy clusters with economic sustainability and resilience, by promoting capacity building initiatives;
- (iv) consolidating the state of art by developing participatory projects relevant for the societal progress;
- (v) innovating the state of art of social economy clusters, stimulating the introduction of new actors and new developmental paradigms, in order to maximise the impact of Social and Solidarity Economy.

2.3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE STRATEGY

The current proposal of Strategy is based on four policy areas, such as: (i) joint investments, (ii) social business models, (iii) capacity building, (iv) advocacy and impact. The first policy area regards the implementation of joint investments aimed to put in place local and regional social economy ecosystems as well as the necessity to introduce innovative dynamics to stimulate existing social economy ecosystems and tackling possible involutional drifts. The policy area on social business models refers to the creation of more competitive social economy ecosystems, by promoting the economic efficiency, diversification and risk-sharing, or maximising the social impact. The capacity building and knowledge relates to endow social economy organisations with skills and competences to face challenges and the deep transformations. Finally, advocacy and impact policy area regard to the increase of the bargaining power of social economy organisations with respect of policy authorities, improving their influence and visibility on the public policy cycle.

Figure 1 - Policy priorities on promoting Social and Solidarity Economy



Source: LINKS on 3P4SSE project

The policy areas, which are emerged during the process of consultation, demonstrate to have an integrated perspective, subtending a rich presence of subdimensions. For this reason, each policy area was declined in policy priorities, according to the Figure 1. The first policy area envisages the start-up investment to trigger the creation of a supportive environment, considering the identification or realisation of adequate infrastructures, the deployment of joint projects and the implementation of territorial experimentation to innovate the social economy clusters. The second policy area includes those actions, aimed to create economies of scale able to foster the reaching of complex and more integrated policy objectives. For example, this policy areas includes the enlargement of the number of profit businesses to maximise the magnitude of the impact of local social economy clusters or the increase of the complexity of social economy value chains. This policy area refers to the exploitation of comparative territorial advantage, intended to improve social business models, considering marketing initiatives as well. The third policy area relates to the creation, sharing and transfer of knowledge, competences and skills, useful to generate a supportive environment to empower social economy organisations. Finally, the fourth policy area concerns the realisation of advocacy activities such as publications, networking, media (visibility), and education, able to improve policy agenda (impact) and influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions.

2.4. THE TOOLKIT TO ENABLE TERRITORIAL PROJECTS

In order to favour the social economy organisations to access to the market and then formalising the collaboration with the public authorities, some policy tools have been provided to facilitate social innovation and solidarity:

- **Social Procurement:** social procurements regard about the adoption of flexibility in specific tendering/procurement procedures, by awarding social criteria coherently with the ‘most economically advantageous tender’ rule and social contract clauses and establishing requirements at different stages of procurement procedures, including in technical specifications.
- **Fiscal Policy:** taxation may have a significant role in fostering the social economy and ensuring that social economy entities can access to the market, alongside profit businesses.
- **Labelling:** labels and certification schemes referring to the social economy organisations value potential added social value produced, by adopting validated and recognised assessment

frameworks and then promoting the quality of services or products on the market, addressing to specific market niches.

- **General Block Exemption Regulation:** the regulation applies diverse crucial flexibilities regarding the provision of state aid resources addressed to social economy entities. This sphere refers to specific activities, such as training, upskilling and the integration of the labour market of disadvantaged people, research and innovation.
- **Services of General Economic Interest:** these services are considered as those ones crucial for the economic, social, and cultural development of a society. Specifically, in the scope of social economy State Aid can be granted for the provision of services carried out by social economy organisations meeting social needs, such as health and long-term care, childcare, access to and reintegration into the labour market, social housing, and the care and social inclusion of vulnerable groups¹⁵.

2.5. SUSTAINABILITY AND GOVERNANCE OF THE STRATEGY

From March 2024, Project Partners will be engaged in the definition of a Memorandum of Understanding, formalising the collaboration among signatories, identifying an organisational setting to assure sustainability and maintenance of the strategy beyond the end of the project.

The protocol of collaboration will illustrate all organisational aspects, including roles, responsibilities and procedures (e.g. Presidency, Board Secretariat, Signatories' Group, vote mechanism) to make participatory, democratic and transparent the governance of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Secondly, a business plan will be developed to ensure the network sustainability, considering budget (e.g. fundraising), communication activities and technical tasks (e.g. common initiatives, SSE outreach, involvement of other territories/organisations, etc.).

3. APPENDIX: THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The International Strategy's policy orientation was defined throughout the realisation of a participatory process, aimed to tackle the untapped potential of social economy for the regional and local development in the Central Europe cooperation area. The consultations have been deployed by a cross-sectoral, multilevel and bottom-up approaches, including the most relevant stakeholders of social economy such as policy authorities, third sector, profit businesses and research organisations, at local, regional and Central European scales (34 organisations).

Figure 2 - Action-research process



Source: LINKS on 3P4SSE project

Starting from the definition of a collective problem (namely the lack of cohesion among Central Europe countries) addressed by the principles of integration, inclusion and innovation pursued by social economy,

15 European Commission (2023). State aid support for the social economy: services of general economic interest. Thematic discussion paper.

the participatory process was focused on three main steps: a) the definition of a common framework on social economy; b) the analysis of common barriers, opportunities and conditionalities to promote local social economy ecosystems and best practices; c) the setting of policy priorities and objectives (Fig. 2).

4. APPENDIX: SCHEME OF LOCAL ACTION PLANS

The co-design process addressing the Local Action Plans is grounded on a place-based approach, by carrying out at least five local workshops (facilitated by ALDA+ experts) engaging local stakeholders, such as public authorities, private and non-profit actors and general public in each pilot area. Second, in each pilot area, Local Action Plans will be drafted and will stimulate the adoption of pilot actions and initiatives. Finally, thanks to a peer review and the results coming from the pilot actions, the Local Action Plans will be revised and adopted in their final version.

4.1. SCHEME OF LOCAL ACTION PLAN: CROATIA

Country	Croatia	
Policy scale	NUTS 3: HR035 - Split-Dalmatia County	
Stakeholders	<i>Business support organisation (1)</i>	Razvojna agencija Općine Dugopolje "ODRAZ"
	<i>Interest groups including NGOs (10)</i>	Lokalna akcijska grupa Škoji, Udruga hrvatskih branitelja liječenih od PTSP-a Splitsko-dalmatinske županije, Braniteljska socijalno-radna zadruga Dalmatia Ruralis, Udruga maslinara Kaštela "Mastrinka", Centar za ruralni razvoj CERURA HR, Šefovi kuhinja mediteranskih i europskih regija (ŠKMER), Leader mreža Hrvatske, Udruga MoSt, Udruga Zdravi grad, Udruga Domine
	<i>Regional public authority (1)</i>	Splitsko-dalmatinska županija
	<i>Small medium enterprises (1)</i>	Održivo d.o.o. za građenje, arhitektonsko projektiranje i prostorno uređenje
Pilot overview		
Strategic vision	<p>In envisioning a future for the SSE with the emphasis on Public-Private Partnership in Split-Dalmatia County, our focus is based around on framework that integrates shared models, values, and ambitions that are deeply rooted in collaboration and community empowerment, and it foresees a transformative journey spanning short, medium and long-term goals. Strategic vision embraces governance model of Platforms and Social Economy Hubs that will serve as a backbone for the creation of collaborative ecosystem that enables capacity building and social and economic inclusion of marginalized groups. Central to this model are the values of equity, inclusiveness, resilience, solidarity and sustainability, which will guide every action and decision in the process. In the short term, the focus is on strengthening capacity of the SSE entities and enhancement of economic inclusivity. By fostering collaboration across various levels and creating employment opportunities for marginalized groups, the strategic goal is aimed in reduction of unemployment and promotion active economic participation.</p> <p>Medium-term goals pivot towards empowering communities, particularly in rural areas, for local development. This phase also emphasizes achieving economic equality across different social groups and fostering innovation in Social and Solidarity Economy models. The long-term vision is anchored in building resilient local economies and communities that are adaptable to changes. It includes increasing social integration through the provision of general interest services and establishing sustainable practices across industries to reduce ecological footprints and promote eco-friendly lifestyles. Operationalizing this vision involves integrating various stakeholders, ensuring their roles align with strategic goals. Collaboration between public, private sectors, and civil society is key, leveraging their strengths for comprehensive development. Policies and practices will reflect core values, ingrained in all aspects of the SSE. Community-centric development initiatives will drive economic and social projects, focusing on local needs and aspirations. Monitoring mechanisms will track progress, ensuring adaptability and responsiveness to changing circumstances. Continual engagement with stakeholders will refine strategies and practices, maintaining alignment with the evolving social and economic landscape.</p> <p>This strategic vision thus offers a holistic roadmap for a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable SSE, grounded in collaboration and resilience, ensuring a future where community development and social justice are paramount.</p>	
Policy Agenda	<p>The policy agenda that emerged from the Local Policy Workshop reflects a strategic alignment with the previous insights gathered in the "D.1.1. Research Report":</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity building, knowledge, and resource sharing 2. Maximising the social impact 3. Promoting economic efficiency 4. Joint initiatives: projects, promotion and marketing, investments, greening the social economy 5. Promoting economic efficiency 6. Increasing visibility and impact 	

<p>Pilot background</p>	<p>7. Diversification and risk- sharing</p> <p>The pilot initiative for Social and Solidarity economy in Split-Dalmatia County is designed to enhance community engagement, social inclusion, and sustainable economic growth. It targets specific geographical areas, focusing on local challenges and harnessing the collective strengths of social enterprises, CSOs and Local Governments. This initiative emphasizes the establishment of Public-Private Partnerships with the aim of further development of the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) in Split-Dalmatia County. Despite the presence of numerous SSE initiatives in Split-Dalmatia County, a notable issue is their fragmentation and isolation and lack of cooperation with Local Governments. Also, there is a discernible lack of organised support for their establishment and development, particularly regarding their capacity building, knowledge enhancement and networking. On the other side, Local Government Authorities in some parts of the County (cities and municipalities), don't have enough knowledge of SSE activities and most, if not all, of their support is aimed toward traditional economic models. The chosen governance model for this pilot hinges on Platforms and Centres of Social Economy. This model is dedicated in creation a territorial/regional supportive ecosystem for the Social and Solidarity Economy. The primary goal of the pilot is to cultivate an environment conducive to the growth and development of the SSE sector, starting at the local community level and extending to a broader regional scope. This will be achieved through offering training programs, research initiatives, advocacy campaigns, and support services for SSE entities through Support Centre that will, in its final form, function as informational and resource hub, sharing best practices and playing a pivotal role in raising the profile of the SSE and their networking with Local Governments. The Support Centre will effectively coordinate and implement pilot projects throughout the region, ensuring scalability and long-term sustainability, enhancing their effectiveness, and ensuring its sustainability and resilience through establishment of Public-Private Partnership.</p>
<p>Scheme of the Local Action Plan</p>	<p>The Scheme of the Local Action Plan consists of four phases of actions to be carried out in concrete steps. These steps are closely based on the governance model of Platforms and Centres of Social Economy, while taking into account the previously mentioned policy goals: capacity building, resource and knowledge sharing, maximising social impact and joint initiatives.</p> <p>Phase 1: Analysis of Local Government Authorities in Split-Dalmatia County that have Experience with or have Developed Social and Solidarity Economy Objective: Analyse the current situation in the 55 local governments that are part of the Split-Dalmatia County with the focus on their experience with SSE and Public-Private Partnerships.</p> <p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect data on existing initiatives and practices (desk research, surveys) • Organize workshops with local stakeholders to exchange experiences and best practices • Group existing initiatives and practices based on conducted analysis on territorial and thematic scope <p>Phase 2: Development of a Territorial/Regional Support Plan for SSE based on Public-Private Partnership Objectives: Develop a comprehensive plan to encourage and support the Social and Solidarity Economy at a territorial/regional level in the Split-Dalmatia County, based on Public-Private Partnerships.</p> <p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft guidelines and strategies based on the findings from Phase 1 • Involve relevant stakeholders in the planning process • Define priority areas and objectives for support <p>Phase 3: Establishment of a Support Centre Objectives: Establish a Support Centre for the Development of Social Entrepreneurship with the emphasis on formation of Public-Private Partnerships</p> <p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the location and resources for the Support Centre (Split-Dalmatia County and National Foundation for Civil Society Development) • Develop training and mentoring programs for social entrepreneurs • Develop a self-sustainability model for the Support Centre • Raise the visibility of SSE initiatives through public campaigns • Introduce metrics for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the Action Plan • Create a network for knowledge exchange and collaboration among social entrepreneurs and other involved entities (CSOs, Local Action Groups, Local Governments, etc.) <p>Phase 4: Pilot Implementation of the Local Action Plan Objectives: Test and implement the Local Action Plan through pilot projects of social entrepreneurs that are based on Public-Private Partnership</p> <p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and co-develop pilot projects • Provide expert support to selected projects • Monitor and evaluate the implementation of projects • Prepare detailed progress and challenge reports <p>Regularly update and adapt the Plan based on feedback and evaluation results</p>

4.2. SCHEME OF LOCAL ACTION PLAN: HUNGARY

<p>Country</p>	<p>Hungary</p>	
<p>Policy scale</p>	<p>Transdanubia - Western Transdanubia - Vas County - HU222</p>	
<p>Stakeholders</p>	<p><i>Public Authorities</i></p>	<p>2</p>
	<p><i>NGOs</i></p>	<p>1</p>
	<p><i>Social and economy actors</i></p>	<p>2</p>
	<p><i>Opinion groups</i></p>	<p>1</p>

Pilot overview	
Strategic vision	Stakeholders are identified: government agencies, businesses, NGOs, social enterprises, and the general public. The core values that stakeholders share are developed: social justice, sustainability, partnership. Develop public-private partnership models that support the development of a social and solidarity economy. Develop sustainability plans to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project results. Regular monitoring and evaluation to track the achievement of the objectives set. The development of partnerships between enterprises, government and NGOs has been identified as a short-term objective. A medium-term objective is to sign strategic cooperation agreements to strengthen public-private partnerships. To further deepen relations between the parties concerned in order to achieve common objectives. In the long term, to extend public-private partnerships to the international level by exporting best practice models. And to use the success of the project to inspire other areas and regions.
Policy Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint initiatives: projects, promotion and marketing, investments • Promoting economic efficiency • Increasing visibility and impact These priorities are partly included also in the local economic development program Szombathely2030.
Pilot background	In the West-Transdanubian region the governance model according to the social clusters' typology works rather in a network. The social enterprises are in informal contact each other and with the intermediary organisations. When we are talking about social enterprises, it means that they have a product or service what should be sell on the market. In this form they have to act as a real business, the products and services have to be marketable. PBN as business support organisation currently offers services to SSEs which are relevant from a business perspective. Unfortunately, the products mostly do not meet the customer's needs, despite the fact that customers are increasingly open to the products of socially responsible companies. Customer feedback during the design and/or market entry phase of products and services is not collected, their analysis is not incorporated into the product, which impairs the chances of entering the market or staying on the market. Therefore, within the framework of the pilot project, we would like to strengthen the user feedback system by developing a certification system based on user evaluations. The 3P approach is ensured as the pilot will be deployed within the context of the economic development program of the Municipality of Szombathely, and Szombathely2030 is a formal cooperation of the relevant local actors.
Scheme of the Local Action Plan	Local Action Plan: Market entry support with customer behaviour analysis Objective: Launching a new service for SSE to supporting market entry with customer behaviour analysis Actions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Customer behaviour analysis system (M1-1) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 creating the infrastructural environment (M1-2) 1.2 purchasing the equipment (analyser tools) (M1-2) 1.3 internal training of the staff (M3-4) 1.4 designing the analysis process (M1-4) 1.5 5 trial analysis (1 website, 1 service, 3 products of SSEs) (M5-10) 1.6 5 analysis report (M5-10) 1.7 Finetuning of the analysis service (M11) 2. "Age friendly" Certification (including Point1) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 knowledge exchange with the relevant best practice's owner (PL) (M1-3) 2.2 Designing the certification process and methodology (M1-3) 2.3 Certificate the 5 trials (M10) 2.4 Finetuning of the certification system (M11) 3. Promotion <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Local stakeholder event involving policy makers and relevant professionals to introduce the service (M10-12) 3.2 Taking part in 3 relevant events where the service and certification model will be introduced for SSEs (M10-12) 3.3 Online marketing activity for promoting the service (e.g. website, social media, etc) (M1-12) 4. Updating the Local Action Plan <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Local workshop with the relevant stakeholders to update the LAP (M11) 4.2 Finalization of the LAP (M12) 5. Launching the new service for SSEs - after the pilot implemented (M13) <p>Timing: cc.12 months depending on project timing Financial resources: staff costs (1 project coordinator, 1 project manager, 1 data analyser cc.25k EUR) + equipment cost (analyser tool kit cc.25k EUR) Sustainability: resource map incl. in LAP Involved region: Polish best parctice: Valley Baryz - certification</p>

4.3. SCHEME OF LOCAL ACTION PLAN: ITALY

Country	Italy	
Policy scale	NUTS III: Trentino Alto Adige, NUTS II: Trento	
Stakeholders	<i>Public Authorities</i>	6
	<i>NGOs</i>	1
	<i>Cooperatives</i>	9
	<i>Bioarchitect</i>	2
	<i>Farmers</i>	3
	<i>Citizens</i>	1
Pilot overview		

Strategic vision	<p>A Province of Trento characterized by territories and sectors of the solidarity economy strongly based on models of close collaboration and shared governance between public/private profit/private social/aware. This is also thanks to architectures and co-management systems such as districts capable of having an increasingly significant impact on the various economic areas and sectors, corresponding to the ESG (Environmental Social and Governance) principles and facilitating an intense production of economic, social value and environmental public value, creating a virtuous circle.</p> <p>Short Term: In the immediate and short term, stakeholders believe it is necessary to strengthen above all the "bottom up" dynamics connected to the establishment and development of DES through awareness-raising, training, communication and marketing activities towards and by citizens and stakeholders.</p> <p>Medium -long Term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater awareness and support for participation, including training activities and the creation of an ad hoc communication plan; - More resources to support DES, in particular (but not only) for coordination functions, but also based on reward schemes; - Greater interaction and sharing of resources within DES and between DES, also through the creation of a formalized network at territorial level (e.g. «Solidarity Economy Forum»). From this point of view, Trentino could become the territory from which an initiative starts which then expands nationally and internationally; - Greater presence of DES in the territory both in numerical terms and through the activation of new types of DES, and greater inclusiveness of the system both in terms of organizations involved and in terms of vulnerable segments of the population; - Innovation in the methods of relationship between public and private with the overcoming of tenders; - Review of the provincial law as a tool for framing and promoting the solidarity economy, in light of a detailed analysis of the impact and strengths and weaknesses of the current system;
Policy Agenda	<p>List of policy priorities chosen:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Joint initiatives: projects, promotion and marketing, investments, making the social economy greener; 2 Capacity building, knowledge and resource sharing 3 Maximize social impact 4 Increase visibility and impact 5 Increase bargaining power and advocacy influence 6 Promote economic efficiency 7 Diversification and risk sharing
Pilot background	<p>Current governance in Trentino Solidarity Economy Provincial Board: advisory body of the Provincial Council (check the implementation of the SE law, manage and steer the SE fund, possible activation of sub-board not present at the moment as envisaged by the law).</p> <p>SE Centre: promote and support the establishment of the SE Districts, funded by the fund at the current situation but it is not a rule.</p> <p>SE Districts (DES): many DES exist but are not active, focus on social employment, lack of internal coordination and contact among the members of the DES expect for those where there is a more active coordinator.</p> <p>Problems identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of coordination among the above three level (board, centre, DES) and among the DESs - lack coordination within the DES - lack of capillarity on the territory - lack of DES with a focus different from the social employment <p>Solutions proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reinforcement of the DES governance which are actual active with a more involvement of public bodies and with more resources for the coordination (as LAP) - more coordination between DESs and Centre that can help collect and disseminate good practices, support the development of the existing DESs, coordination among them and the new ones, etc. - activation of sub-boards at local level within the provincial board, starting with the liveliest territories aiming at having one for each valley
Scheme of the Local Action Plan	<p>Pilot Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. activate a bottom-up approach that guarantees greater interaction between citizens, DES and public administration. In particular, there must be widespread awareness-raising actions in the territory with meetings and initiatives even in the valleys and in the most marginal territories, the inclusion of the topic of DES in already existing training courses (e.g. training of territorial managers, Master GIS, etc.), in awareness and training courses to be continued and strengthened. 2. dedicated mapping of solidarity/social initiatives (constantly updated) and updating of the current system of DESs also aimed at the creation of new DESs and new pilot projects in the area. 3. Promotion of a complementary currency system. <p>Next Steps: All these elements will be rediscussed within the WP2. A detailed project plan, including a budget, timeline, and performance indicators, will be developed during the next few months to implement the action plan in concrete.</p>

4.4. SCHEME OF LOCAL ACTION PLAN: POLAND

Country	Poland
Policy scale	NUTS 2, Lower Silesia

Stakeholders	<i>Public Authorities</i> (4)	<p>Lower Silesian Centre for Social Policy (DOPS) responsible for coordinating the development of social economy in the region and initiating cooperation between public institutions, social enterprises and entities from the business, scientific, educational environment in the field of social economy.</p> <p>The Marshal's Office of the Lower Silesian Voivodeship (UMWD) - the Managing Authority responsible for planning and implementing programmes under which projects directly influencing the development of social economy in the region are implemented. Depending on the division of competences, individual departments prepare a proposal of criteria for selecting projects for co-financing and support their implementation.</p> <p>Social Welfare Centre (OPS) - an organisational unit of social assistance providing support to people who are excluded or threatened by social exclusion.</p> <p>Lower Silesian Social Welfare Forum (Dolnośląskie Forum Pomocy Społecznej) - an umbrella organisation carrying out advocacy activities for the development and strengthening of the social economy sector and a platform for cooperation between the three sectors.</p>
	<i>Sectoral agency</i> (2)	<p>Social Economy Support Centre (OWES) - provides support to social economy entities, including social enterprises, in the field of: animation, consulting, training, reintegration activities, as well as financial support for the creation of new jobs. OWES are also intended to stimulate social activity in local communities and to initiate and develop cross-sectoral local partnerships.</p> <p>ARLEG Regional Development Agency - working to support the economic and social development of the region, active in the labour market by supporting entrepreneurship and decreasing unemployment especially among those at risk of exclusion.</p>
	<i>NGOs</i> (1)	<p>"The Partnership for Barycz Valley" Association (Partnerstwo Dolina Baryczy) - association of representatives of the public, economic and social sectors (individuals and legal entities), acting for sustainable development of rural and fishing areas of the Barycz Valley</p>
	<i>SME</i> (2)	<p>"PANATO BAG" - a representative of social enterprise and a nationwide network of social enterprises employing people with disabilities.</p> <p>"Zielony Wulkan" - enterprise providing educational activities for children and young people in the field of pro-ecological and consumer education. Member of an informal network of businesses working for local development and sustainability.</p>

Pilot overview

Strategic vision	<p>The discussion with stakeholders showed that the cooperation between social economy entities and local government needs to be strengthened, also in the areas of long-term commissioning of public tasks and implementation of socially responsible public procurement. This situation is influenced, among others, by the lack of knowledge about the benefits of cooperation and insufficient human resources in local government units. When the cooperation is undertaken, the short-lived nature of projects and the lack of continuation of activities due to lack of further funding were indicated. On the other hand, the low organisational and technical potential and poor financial condition of a significant part of social economy entities are translated into low competitiveness of these entities in relation to other market (commercial) economic entities. The insufficient number of stable networks, clusters, consortia of social economy entities was indicated as the reason for this situation. At the same time, social enterprises and representatives of local institutions (Social Welfare Centre) showed great interest in participating in PP partnerships, and among the presented models of cooperation, the Italian model (DES) was identified as a reference, and selected elements of it as possible and worth using in our region in creating a model of cooperation. The sustainability of funding, greater decision-making at the local level, and the existence of a body responsible for monitoring and supporting the activities of DES are noteworthy. According to the workshop participants, the counterpart of such an entity in Poland could be Local Action Groups as activity centres, having contacts and implementing permanent animation activities in rural areas.</p> <p>Objectives to be achieved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the competence of local government units in supporting the creation and development of cooperation networks (clustering) in the field of social and solidarity economy (access to knowledge - guides, recommendations, good practices) 2. Systematic promotion and support (financing) of creation of networks / partnerships at the regional level, acting in favour of social and solidarity economy 3. Introduction of mechanisms obliging territorial local government units to contract social economy entities, on the other hand, lack of potential of social economy entities (insufficient number of social economy entities with potential to provide services for territorial government units);
Policy Agenda	<p>Stakeholders ranked the policy priorities according to the list below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joint initiatives: projects, promotion and marketing, investments, greening the social economy 2. Capacity building, knowledge, and resource sharing 3. Increasing bargaining power and advocacy influence 4. Increasing visibility and impact 5. Maximising the social impact 6. Promoting economic efficiency by costs' reduction or joint purchases 7. Diversification and risk-sharing
Pilot background	<p>The institutional basis for future activities is social economy support institutions, i.e. Social Economy Support Centres (5 OWES in the voivodeship, covering the entire area of the Lower Silesian Voivodeship), and local government institutions, i.e. Marshal's Office of the Lower Silesian Voivodeship and Lower Silesian Voivodeship Labour Office, Lower Silesian Centre for Social Policy (DOPS) and institutions</p>

	<p>supporting entrepreneurs, i.e. ARLEG Regional Development Agency. In addition, the Cluster of Social Economy Initiatives and Local Action Groups as a resource for rural areas.</p> <p>According to the Regional Programme for Social Economy Development in the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2021-2027, published in October 2023, which is the basis for planning and programming specific interventions at the regional level, one of the goals is to “Increase the involvement of local government in the development of social economy and improve cooperation with social economy entities”. Within the framework of EU funds and national funds, for the period 2021-2030, the activities will promote the creation and development of networks of social economy entities, dissemination among social economy entities of knowledge on opportunities for cooperation within consortia, franchises, clusters and exchange of experience and promotion of good practices concerning cooperation of social economy entities (including study visits, networking). The process of creating consortia associating social economy entities and entities from outside the social economy sector (especially business entities), contributing to develop the potential for applying for public procurement will be strengthened. Solutions will also be developed by Regional Centres of Social Policy in the scope of creation and functioning of consortia assuming cooperation of social economy entities and social assistance institutions, e.g.: Social Assistance Centres, Shared Services Centres, Day Care Centres. Preferred cooperation models - clusters and consortia.</p>
Scheme of the Local Action Plan	<p>Objectives to be achieved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the competence of local government units in supporting the creation and development of cooperation networks (clustering) in the field of social and solidarity economy (access to knowledge - guides, recommendations, good practices) 2. Systematic promotion and support (financing) of creation of networks / partnerships at the regional level, acting in favour of social and solidarity economy 3. Introduction of mechanisms obliging territorial local government units to contract social economy entities, on the other hand, lack of potential of social economy entities (insufficient number of social economy entities with potential to provide services for territorial government units); <p>Implementation of pilot activities for the creation of networks/clusters in accordance with the guidelines and provisions of the Regional and National Programme for the Development of the Social Economy 2021-2027, which is the basis for planning and programming of specific interventions at the level of the region for the development of the social economy, including the creation and development of social economy entities. Indicated as a reference - the Italian model (DES), and selected elements of it as possible and worth applying include: sustainability of funding, greater decision-making at the local level, the existence of an entity responsible for monitoring and supporting DES activities. The counterpart of such an entity in Poland could be Local Action Groups as activity centres with contacts and permanent animation activities in rural areas.</p> <p>Key sources of funding for social economy development in the Lower Silesian Voivodeship include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - European Social Fund resources available at national and regional level; - other EU funds including programmes allowing implementation of ES initiatives; - state budget funds; - budget funds of territorial self-government units at the voivodeship, poviast and commune level

4.5. SCHEME OF LOCAL ACTION PLAN: SLOVENIA

Country	Slovenia	
Policy scale	NUTS III: Podravje region, NUTS II: Vzhodna Slovenija	
Stakeholders	<i>Public Authorities (5)</i>	Municipalities of Poljčane and Makole, Association of municipalities SOS
	<i>Citizens</i>	2
	<i>PPs</i>	5
	<i>NGOs</i>	4
	<i>Farmers and support organisations</i>	8
Pilot overview		
Strategic vision	<p>Projection of a Future Scenario: A Collaborative Vision for Community Well-being</p> <p>In envisioning the future of the community of Poljčane, our stakeholders have collaboratively crafted a dynamic and inclusive scenario that aligns with shared values, models, and ambitions. This forward-looking vision has been developed through engaging discussions among diverse stakeholders, aiming to define achievable goals in the short, medium, and long term.</p> <p>Shared Models, Values, and Ambitions:</p> <p>Models:</p> <p>Collaborative Social Cluster/Network: Our stakeholders envision the successful implementation of collaborative social network focusing on poverty alleviation, employment generation, elderly care, and environmental sustainability. The network serves as models of effective collaboration among local government, NGOs, businesses, and community leaders.</p> <p>Umbrella Organization Excellence: The established Umbrella Organization becomes a model for efficient coordination, aligning efforts, ensuring transparent communication, and overseeing the successful implementation of the comprehensive policy agenda.</p> <p>Values:</p>	

	<p>Inclusivity and Empowerment: The future scenario emphasizes inclusivity, ensuring that all community members have a voice in shaping policies and programs. Empowerment is at the core, encouraging active participation and contribution from diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>Sustainability: A commitment to sustainable development underlies the envisioned future, where initiatives are designed to be self-sustaining, reducing dependence on external resources.</p> <p>Ambitions:</p> <p>Resilient Community: The future scenario aspires to create a resilient community capable of addressing challenges promptly and effectively. This involves fostering adaptability and innovative thinking among residents.</p> <p>Thriving Social Network: Ambitions include the success of social clusters becoming thriving hubs of activity, addressing specific challenges while contributing to the overall well-being of the community.</p> <p>Goals in the Brief, Medium, and Long Term:</p> <p>Short Term:</p> <p>Establishment and Launch: In the short term, the primary goal is the successful establishment and launch of the Umbrella Organization and the collaborative social network. This involves setting up infrastructure, appointing key personnel, and initiating the first phases of the policy agenda.</p> <p>Community Awareness: Increase community awareness and understanding of the new governance model and the policy agenda. Conduct initial workshops and awareness campaigns to ensure active involvement from the outset.</p> <p>Medium Term:</p> <p>Functional Social Network: By the medium term, the social network should be fully functional, actively addressing the identified challenges. Each cluster aims to achieve specific milestones outlined in the policy agenda, contributing significantly to the overall improvement of community well-being.</p> <p>Policy Innovation Lab: The functioning of policy innovation lab/SocioLab become a focal point in the medium term. These lab serves as dynamic spaces for stakeholders to collaboratively design and test innovative solutions to emerging challenges.</p> <p>Long Term:</p> <p>Sustainable Community Development: In the long term, the community of Poljčane aspires to achieve sustainable development. The policy agenda and social network are expected to have a lasting impact, fostering continued growth, inclusivity, and well-being.</p> <p>Transnational Collaboration: Long-term goals include expanding collaboration beyond local borders, sharing best practices, and contributing to transnational workshops. The community aims to become a model for rural development, inspiring similar initiatives globally. The results of this forward-looking section will be discussed in-depth during the transnational workshop, ensuring that the collaborative vision aligns with the broader objectives of sustainable community development and social innovation.</p>
<p>Policy Agenda</p>	<p>The entire Action Plan will be developed on the first policy priority about “joint initiatives focusing on projects, promotion and marketing, investments, and greening the social economy” aimed to address the complex social and environmental challenges faced by the community of Poljčane. By fostering collaborative efforts among stakeholders, it seeks to implement a holistic policy agenda that promotes inclusivity, sustainability, and innovation. Moreover, the policy agenda was detailed in sub-objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Combatting Poverty and Social Deprivation: Implement targeted social welfare programs to address the high risk of poverty among vulnerable populations, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and those with low education levels. Establish comprehensive support systems for the materially and socially disadvantaged, focusing on access to education, healthcare, and housing. 2. Tackling Unemployment and Motivation Issues: Develop job creation initiatives and training programs to reduce the persistently high levels of long-term unemployment. Promote community engagement and motivation through awareness campaigns, educational programs, and community-building activities. 3. Addressing Aging Population Challenges: Invest in elderly care infrastructure, including the establishment of long-term care facilities and the promotion of intergenerational day centres. Develop policies to support active aging, providing opportunities for continued participation in social and economic activities. 4. Enhancing Local Collaboration and Awareness: Facilitate collaboration among local providers, such as those in tourism and agriculture, to create synergies that boost economic growth. Implement awareness campaigns targeting both residents and local businesses to promote community engagement and cooperation. 5. Alleviating Land Use Challenges: Address the shortage of agricultural land by reviewing and adjusting regulations while respecting environmental concerns. Work towards balancing conservation efforts in protected areas like Natura 2000 with the economic needs of the community. 6. Revitalizing Protected Areas: Implement comprehensive plans for the sustainable development of protected areas, balancing conservation goals with the economic needs of the region. Foster community involvement in the management and preservation of protected areas. 7. Addressing Youth Disengagement and Vandalism: Develop youth engagement programs and recreational activities to discourage antisocial behaviour. Collaborate with local schools, community organizations, and law enforcement to address the root causes of youth disengagement. 8. Optimizing Social Housing Programs: Evaluate and update social housing programs to ensure efficient use of resources and effective support for those in need.

	<p>Explore partnerships with non-profit organizations to enhance social housing initiatives.</p> <p>9. Supporting Agricultural Succession Planning: Develop programs to address challenges related to the aging population of farmers and inheritance issues. Provide resources for training and education to encourage younger generations to take up farming.</p> <p>10. Reducing Development Disparities: Implement targeted development programs to reduce the development index disparities and ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities. Foster regional collaboration to share best practices and promote balanced development.</p>
<p>Pilot background</p>	<p>The governance model of the pilot initiative emphasizes fostering collaborative social networks, which aligns with the promotion and marketing aspect of joint initiatives. Through the establishment of an Umbrella Organization and SocioLab, the initiative aims to coordinate efforts, facilitate communication, and oversee the implementation of comprehensive policies, thus promoting efficient and transparent governance practices. Furthermore, the pilot initiative emphasizes the importance of leveraging partnerships and investments to support its goals. By exploring partnerships with local businesses and industries, as well as seeking community contributions and private donations, it aims to establish sustainable funding models for its initiatives. This aligns with the investment aspect of joint initiatives, which focuses on mobilizing resources to support social and economic development. Moreover, the pilot initiative prioritizes greening the social economy by designing initiatives that are self-sustaining over time and promoting environmentally sustainable practices. By implementing capacity-building programs and fostering long-term partnerships with educational institutions, it aims to empower community members and ensure the continued success of its initiatives. This aligns with the greening aspect of joint initiatives, which emphasizes promoting sustainable development and environmental stewardship. In summary, the pilot initiative's approach to enhancing community well-being in rural municipalities closely aligns with the objectives of joint initiatives related to projects, promotion and marketing, investments, and greening the social economy. Through collaborative efforts, innovative solutions, and strategic partnerships, it aims to create positive social and economic impacts while promoting environmental sustainability.</p> <p>Set up PPP for the provision of the social and solidarity economy in rural areas of Podravje region.</p> <p>Pilot Background and Governance Model: "Pilot Background: Enhancing Community Well-being in rural municipalities" Our pilot initiative is designed to address the complex social and environmental challenges faced by the community of Poljčane. The challenges include high levels of poverty, unemployment, an aging population, and issues related to land use and protected areas. Recognizing the interconnected nature of these challenges, our pilot aims to implement a holistic policy agenda that fosters collaboration, inclusivity, and sustainable development.</p> <p>Governance Model: Fostering Collaborative Social Network Umbrella Organization: At the heart of our governance model is the establishment of an Umbrella Organization, as the coordinating body for the various social initiatives within the community. This organization will play a pivotal role in aligning efforts, ensuring communication, and overseeing the implementation of the policy agenda. Social Network: To effectively address the multifaceted challenges, SocioLab will be utilised and focused on the areas such as poverty alleviation, employment generation, elderly care, and environmental sustainability. This network will consist of representatives from local government, NGOs, businesses, and community leaders, fostering a collaborative approach to problem-solving. Network and Partnership: Within social network and partnership will leverage the strengths and resources of diverse stakeholders. For instance, in addressing unemployment, the employment generation will be done through the partnerships with local businesses, educational institutions, and training centres to create tailored programs. Community Engagement Platforms: To ensure the active participation of residents, community engagement platforms will be developed. These platforms will serve as spaces for dialogue, idea sharing, and feedback collection, allowing residents to play an integral role in shaping the policies and programs that directly impact their lives. Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism: A robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism will be put in place to assess the effectiveness of the initiatives. Regular feedback loops will involve not only the Umbrella Organization but also the broader community, ensuring transparency and accountability. Policy Innovation Lab: To encourage innovation and adaptive governance, policy innovation lab SocioLab will be involved. SocioLab will act as dynamic spaces where stakeholders can collaboratively design and test innovative solutions to emerging challenges, promoting continuous improvement. By adopting this governance model, we envision a community-led approach that empowers residents, fosters collaboration among diverse stakeholders, and ensures the sustainable implementation of the policy agenda. Through the formation of social clusters and the establishment of effective networks, our pilot aims to create a resilient and thriving community in Podravje region.</p> <p>The proposed pilot initiative aligns well with the workshop ideas outlined in local policy workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Addressing Nature 2000 Challenges: The proposed focus on Dravinjska dolina as a World`s Bio-region aligns with the workshop's emphasis on utilizing NATURA 2000. Encouraging a healthy lifestyle and promoting the connection between humans and nature resonate with the workshop's themes. ▫ Supporting Existing Service Providers: The emphasis on supporting existing service providers aligns with the idea of fostering public-private partnerships for solidarity and social economy support, as suggested in the workshop. ▫ Promoting Alternative Forms: Offering alternative services aligns with the workshop's emphasis on innovative, socially responsible initiatives, including private education, therapeutic services, and more. ▫ Activating Natural and Social Values: The activation of natural and social values in Dravinjska dolina, including religious paths and intergenerational collaboration, resonates with the workshop's vision. ▫ Supporting Diverse Learning Environments:

	<p>The proposal to support diverse learning environments aligns with the workshop's call to support innovative social and economic initiatives.</p> <p>Addressing Aging Population Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Practical Knowledge Courses and Workshops: Practical knowledge courses and workshops for the elderly align with the workshop's emphasis on practical skill development. ▫ Living Museum and Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer: The idea of a "living museum" and knowledge transfer between generations corresponds with the workshop's emphasis on showcasing traditional knowledge and social capital. ▫ Wellness Offerings for Seniors: Terme for senior citizens" aligns with the workshop's emphasis on creating wellness offerings for the aging population. ▫ New Services and Shared Living: The proposal to offer new services and explore shared living arrangements corresponds with the workshop's vision for diverse and supportive aging solutions. ▫ Integration with Tourism: Integrating housing with tourism and offering products and souvenirs aligns with the workshop's emphasis on creating economic opportunities. <p>Connecting Local Providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Offer Analysis and Upgradation: The proposal to analyse and upgrade offerings aligns with the workshop's focus on improving and diversifying local services. ▫ Packaging for Different Age Groups: Creating packages for different age groups corresponds with the workshop's vision of inclusivity. ▫ Tourism Fairs and Events: Suggesting tourism fairs and events, including activities for all age groups, aligns with the workshop's idea of connecting various target audiences and activities. ▫ Joint Administrative Support: The proposal for a shared administrative service aligns with the workshop's vision of collaboration in administrative, marketing, and reception services. ▫ Cultural and Culinary Experiences: Offering experiential holidays and encouraging local events aligns with the workshop's focus on fostering a vibrant community.
<p>Scheme of the Local Action Plan</p>	<p>Objectives and Scheme of Actions:</p> <p>Pilot Objectives:</p> <p>Alleviating Poverty and Social Deprivation: Implement targeted social welfare programs for vulnerable populations.</p> <p>Tackling Unemployment and Motivation Issues: Develop job creation initiatives and training programs.</p> <p>Addressing Aging Population Challenges: Invest in elderly care infrastructure and long-term care facilities.</p> <p>Enhancing Local Collaboration and Awareness: Facilitate collaboration among local providers in tourism and agriculture.</p> <p>Alleviating Land Use Challenges: Review and adjust regulations to address agricultural land shortage.</p> <p>Boosting Industrial Zones and Economic Expansion: Identify and designate suitable areas for industrial development.</p> <p>Revitalizing Protected Areas: Implement plans for sustainable development of protected areas.</p> <p>Addressing Youth Disengagement and Vandalism: Develop youth engagement programs and recreational activities.</p> <p>Optimizing Social Housing Programs: Evaluate and update social housing programs.</p> <p>Supporting Agricultural Succession Planning: Develop programs to address challenges related to aging farmers.</p> <p>Reducing Development Disparities: Implement targeted development programs to reduce disparities.</p> <p>Preliminary Financial Resources and Sustainability Aspects:</p> <p>Financial Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Umbrella Organization will work towards establishing a sustainable funding model through community contributions and private donations. • Partnerships with local businesses and industries will be explored for financial support. <p>Sustainability Aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social clusters and initiatives will be designed to be self-sustaining over time. • Capacity-building programs will be implemented to empower community members for continued success.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long-term partnerships with educational institutions will ensure the ongoing development of human resources within the community.
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Next Steps: All these elements will constitute the baseline to be deepened and refined within the context of WP2. A detailed project plan, including a budget, timeline, and performance indicators, will be developed during this phase to guide the successful implementation of the pilot initiative.