



Webinaire de la Présidence Française du Conseil de l'Union Européenne sur l'implémentation du Plan d'Action Européen pour l'économie sociale

Jeudi 17 février 2022 de 10h30 à 12h

Questions réponses des onze acteurs de l'économie sociale :

1. **Stefanos Kamperis, Manager of the very innovative [Coopérative Staramaki](#), Grèce**

Commissioner,

The characteristics of social economy enterprises differ a lot from country to country concerning their maturity, number, size, legal forms and fields of activities.

Social economy enterprises and their eco-systems in Greece is at an infant level constraining their development and their ability to be supported by the European Social Economy Action Plan.

For instance, our innovative cooperative, producing drinking straws from natural wheat stems, tried to register in the National Registry of Greek Startups ,called ELEVATE GRECE , in order to explore funding opportunities. .

Unfortunately, according to them (Elevate Greece), social economy enterprises are EXCLUDED from the registry.

How can the Social Economy Action Plan accompany social economy enterprises and Member States to overcome these obstacles? How is the European Commission connecting social economy policies with policies for start ups and with the wider Industrial Strategy?

2. **Jeanne Bretécher, cooperator and President and Founder of the Social Good Accelerator Association, France/Belgium, on the Digital Transition that social economy is facing, and on upskilling and reskilling**

Monsieur le Commissaire :

L'économie sociale appelle une gestion prévisionnelle des emplois et des carrières assez spécifiques, mais à date nous n'avons que peu de perspectives sur les métiers



qui existent à peine ou pas encore, en particulier dans le numérique. Alors que l'économie sociale est à la fois un acteur économique et un intermédiaire vers les plus fragiles. C'est à la fois une question de volonté politique et de financement.

Dans le cadre du plan d'action et du Pact for skills, comment avez-vous prévu de soutenir le développement des nouveaux métiers numériques dans l'économie sociale ?

3. Grzegorz Buczkowski, CEO OF Saltus TUW, Poland, Président de l'AMICE : on the recognition of mutual and cooperative insurers in Europe

Commissioner,

Europe's mutual insurers were encouraged to see the recognition of the mutual insurance form reflected in the Social Economy Action Plan. These types of insurers empower their policyholders through ownership and democratic representation, ensuring that the benefits of the insurance activities are applied solely to their policyholders' benefits. This can manifest in many different actions, including providing insurance products which are not provided by other more commercial forms of insurance, helping to narrow the protection gap, and ensuring that insurance is provided at the most appropriate rate for the risks involved. Although the mutual insurance model is recognised at different levels and in varying structures in Member States, more than 30% of insurance provided to European policyholders is provided in mutual or similar insurance structures.

Health insurance, particularly in the form of mutual benefit societies, is a vital support for national health systems in several Member States; however, mutual and cooperatives insurers provide security across many different types of insurance, including personal lines in life and non-life insurance, commercial lines, pensions and reinsurance across the EU. These types of insurers are therefore core participants and contributors within European's social economy, and of significant importance in providing economic stability and future security.

We believe that the mutual/cooperative insurance model is not as well-understood within the European institutional community as we would believe would be appropriate to reflect its importance to financial stability and economic development.

A key recommendation in the Social Economy Action Plan is for training and workshops to extend civil servants' understanding of the social economy and its different forms in Europe. **Does the Commissioner anticipate that the mutual insurance model will be presented in these workshops, as a key factor in the social economy?**



4. Daniela Meridda, responsable de projets de services sociaux à la Cooperativa Impresa Sociale Ruah, Italy on socially responsible public procurement

Commissaire,

L'une des principales vertus du plan d'action est qu'il apporte une forme de reconnaissance du potentiel que revêt l'économie sociale pour les futures politiques sociales et industrielles de l'Union européenne.

Cependant, du fait même de l'importance des missions d'intérêt général auxquelles l'économie sociale contribue, il importe de définir aussi des objectifs afin d'améliorer les stratégies de collaboration entre les administrations publiques et les organisations de l'économie sociale.

Pour améliorer l'accès des entreprises de l'économie sociale aux marchés publics, de nombreux progrès ont été réalisés grâce à la directive sur les marchés publics de 2014. Cependant, ces relations pourraient encore être améliorées avec une mise à jour de la Directive sur les marchés publics, car aujourd'hui encore, la plupart des marchés publics répondent à des règles et critères en vertu desquels c'est le prix des biens et des services qui prime, et il est encore assez rare que l'on applique la formule des marchés publics socialement responsables en attribuant plus de poids à l'évaluation qualitative de l'offre.

Et en particulier pour l'article 77 sur le régime assoupli pour les services sociaux, il serait très intéressant d'introduire une distinction plus nette entre la poursuite de l'intérêt général et la réalisation du marché unique, afin d'asseoir sur une meilleure base juridique la conclusion d'accords de collaboration entre les organismes publics et les acteurs de l'économie sociale. **Pensez-vous que des telles réformes pour pousser la commande publique socialement responsable sont possibles dans les prochaines années ?**

5. Frédéric Simonart, Co-Founder and CEO of Duo For a Job, Belgium, on EU funding and financial instruments for the social economy

We strongly believe in outcome based financial mechanisms since we benefited from a SIB to launch our activities a few years ago. Unfortunately, we notice many entry barriers to those new financial instruments for social economy enterprises in general : measurability of the social mission, legal constraints, implementation costs, data/control group access, etc.



How to ensure that these new financing mechanisms will be accessible to more social enterprises in the future (like it has been for DUO for a JOB)?

6. Renan Ayrault, Co-Dirigeant et Fondateur d'Ammareal SAS, France, also on access to finance

Renan Ayrault, dirigeant d'Ammareal, présenterait son entreprise qui est une entreprise Esus. Cette entreprise revend des livres usagés. Elle reverse une partie de la vente de chaque livre à des associations d'aide aux publics fragiles et emploie des personnes éloignées de l'emploi et issues de quartiers défavorisés. Cette entreprise a développé une activité à travers l'Union européenne notamment et fait 20% de son chiffre d'affaires à l'export. Dans le cadre de sa forte croissance, cette entreprise va bénéficier de la disposition législative visant à réserver 10% des montants levés dans le cadre de l'épargne salariale à des investissements dans des entreprises de l'ESS.

La Commission européenne a indiqué dans son plan qu'elle souhaitait améliorer l'accès au financement des entreprises de l'ESS notamment pour leur croissance : quels sont les outils que la Commission va créer ou développer en 2022, notamment dans le cadre du programme Invest EU, pour améliorer cet accès aux financements ?

7. Laura Peracaula , President of Suara Cooperative, Spain: support instruments for the social economy to scale up also at trans-national level

Social and care services have been traditionally managed by charities and non-profit corporations -some of them religious-, cooperatives and self-managed associations that are organized to respond to vulnerability situations from the proximity. The social economy has demanded public financing and social policies, while struggling to seek all kinds of resources to respond to these needs.

During the last 15 years there has been the emergence of investment funds and trade companies that have their origin in construction or cleaning that have broken into the social and care sector with speculative interest, with a clear model of capitalism of what is public, resulting in the disappearance of many non-profit social economy entities. A new model that questions the investors interest, relegating the service quality and a proximity-based model management to the background.

However, thanks to the great resilience capacity of the social economy, it has resisted and has continued struggling to transform and digitize itself to face the demographic challenge keeping the desire of people to live in their own homes for as long as possible. We already have social economy projects ready to be tested with the aim of offering personalized care, giving security and support to the person, making life easier



with the help of the community and improving the working conditions of professionals. All this with digitization as a transversal element.

For this, it is necessary to be able to invest, test, evaluate and transfer learning to scale. **Does the EU have specific funding planned to invest in and test new technologies and methodologies for social economy companies, to respond to aging people needs through a social economy model from the community, close to the person and efficient? Are transnational projects proposed to be replicated in different countries? How do we guarantee access to financing and avoid speculative interest in these projects?**

8. Frederico Cruzeiro Costa, Founder and President of Social Entrepreneurs Agency in Portugal

Commissioner, my questions are:

How can we make sure the social economy and its potential are recognized, especially regarding youth participation?

Is it planned to open funding opportunities for social economy organizations run by youth to start up and scale up?

Will it be any fund opportunities for local based projects, sourced directly by the local community's needs?

9. Loli Battesti, Jeune *Ambassadrice de la Croix-Rouge française pour la PFUE, bénévole à la Direction Territoriale Isère et Membre du Conseil d'Administration de la Croix-Rouge française.*

Monsieur le Commissaire,

En effet, pour la PFUE, notre association a choisi de mettre en avant 10 jeunes qui portent leur voix et représentent la CRf dans les événements organisés ce semestre particulier.

Au sein de la Croix-Rouge française, nous sommes convaincus que l'engagement des jeunes garantira l'avenir du secteur de l'ESS. En effet, en tant que dirigeants du monde de demain, ils sont vecteurs de nouvelles actions et de nouvelles approches plus innovantes.

Pour faire face aux enjeux actuels, les activités du secteur de l'ESS sont une formidable opportunité pour les jeunes de trouver de nouvelles solutions, de nouvelles formes d'engagement et de nouvelles formes d'expression. En effet, face aux défis mondiaux et locaux (changement climatique, pauvreté, migrations...) les jeunes se mobilisent de manière accrue dans des actions concrètes, qui leur donnent le



sentiment d'utilité. Ils le font à travers de nouvelles formes d'engagement, il serait donc intéressant de reconsidérer la légitimité et la place que nous accordons à l'engagement des jeunes, dans leurs modes d'expression.

Ma question aujourd'hui est donc celle-ci Monsieur le Commissaire:

Comment le plan d'action européen pour l'économie sociale souhaite donner corps à ces formes d'engagement et d'expression des jeunes pour assurer l'avenir du secteur et concrétiser la place des jeunes dans sa mise en œuvre sur le terrain ?

10. Juliana Kronen, Co-Founder and CEO of Innatura, Germany.

I would like to focus my question around how social enterprises can help to improve resource efficiency in the EU. As you might know, my social enterprise innatura distributes brand-new consumer goods (in kind donations) which otherwise would be disposed of to over 5,500 charities in Germany. Thus, our impact is both an environmental and a societal.

However, in most EU countries, donating products is more expensive for companies than to destroy them, due to a VAT obligation in most countries. **Therefore, I would like to ask the commissioner what actions is the Commission foreseeing, in the framework of SEAP to overcome these obstacles, to avoid unnecessary waste and improve resource efficiency?**

11. Olga Maximova, Head of Nonprofit Development at Czechitas, Czech Republic

Commissioner, I really enjoyed reading the plan when it first came out and I am so glad that the EC will address some of the issues that the social economy enterprises face today. As many social enterprises need to prove their social impact, I would like to ask:

How and when will the EC measure the effectiveness of the Social Economy plan? Will the EC hold regular meetings or issue regular statements with or to the key stakeholders showcase the results, impact and effect of the plan?