



Scenarios towards the co-creation of a transition pathway for a resilient, innovative, sustainable and digital proximity and social economy ecosystem

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

[The update of the EU Industrial Strategy](#) highlights the need to accelerate the green and digital transitions of EU Industry. Among the various instruments, the Commission proposed to co-create, in partnership with industry, public authorities, social partners and other stakeholders, transition pathways for ecosystems, where needed. The proximity & social economy ecosystem was identified among those ecosystems to develop such a transition pathway.

The Commission services have prepared a Staff Working Document to outline possible scenarios for a transition pathway towards a more resilient, green and digital proximity and social economy industrial ecosystem. Through collaborative efforts, the aim is to co-create concrete actions and commitments with all stakeholders of this ecosystem to step up its green and digital transition and strengthen its resilience to future shocks.

These efforts will build upon the EU Industrial strategy update, which highlighted the need to accelerate the green and digital transitions of EU Industry and identified needs and challenges of 14 industrial ecosystems.

They will also build on the Action Plan on the Social Economy, which proposes a series of actions for the period 2021-2030 to support the development of the social economy.

Based on the results of the consultation, the EC will organise further meetings with stakeholders to deepen the discussions towards finalising the proximity & social economy pathway during 2022.

You are invited to engage in this process by contributing to this survey that will run until 28 February 2022.

In case of questions about this consultation, please send an email to GROW-SOCIAL-ENTERPRISE@ec.europa.eu

1 Organisation and personal information

* 1.1 First name

20 character(s) maximum

Aurora

* 1.2 Surname (family name)

Prospero

* 1.3 Which organisation do you represent

20 character(s) maximum

FEBEA aisbl

* 1.4 Main location of operations (city)

20 character(s) maximum

Bruxelles

* 1.5 Country of origin of the organisation or the headquarters of a network

- AT - Austria
- BE - Belgium
- BG - Bulgaria
- HR - Croatia
- CY - Cyprus
- CZ - Czechia
- DK - Denmark
- EE - Estonia
- EU - EU level
- FI - Finland
- FR - France
- DE - Germany
- EL - Greece
- HU - Hungary
- IE - Ireland
- IT - Italy
- LV - Latvia

- LT - Lithuania
- LU - Luxembourg
- MT - Malta
- NL - Netherlands
- PL - Poland
- PT - Portugal
- RO - Romania
- SK - Slovak Republic
- SI - Slovenia
- ES - Spain
- SE - Sweden

* 1.6 What kind of organisation do you represent

- Social economy entity
- Social economy representative organisation
- Social economy sector federation
- Social economy cluster
- Social economy support organisation
- Academic / Research institution
- Public administration
- International Organisation
- EU Institution
- Mainstream business
- Trade Union
- None: EU citizen
- Other

* 1.7 Your organisation is mainly active at...

- EU level
- Member state level
- Regional level
- Local level

1.8 I consider my organisation as part of the

- Proximity economy

Social economy

* 1.9 The competences of your organisation are mostly related to...

Green transition

Digital transition

None

2 Consultation questions

You are invited to reflect the different issues and scenarios presented in the Staff Working Document for the key dimensions of Resilience, Sustainability and Digitalisation. You may choose which questions you answer, and leave others empty. Please, in particular, propose concrete actions and targets. Quantifiable evidence is very much welcome.

Please read and reflect the issues and scenarios proposed in the Section III of the Staff Working Document.

2.1 Fully enabling the ecosystem as agent for the green transition

* 2.1.1 What output scenarios for 2030 would benefit the development of a green proximity and social economy industrial ecosystem, in line with the priorities of the EU Industrial Strategy and the social economy action plan?

2000 character(s) maximum

1. Enabling ecosystems: support Ethical Finance as a critical factor for the development of green proximity and social economy. By creating enabling ecosystems for the development of social economy we can ensure that this sector grows in other EU member states where it is less developed today. There is a strong correlation between the development of social economy and ethical finance in Europe. Investing in the development of Ethical finance throughout Europe, to ensure the parallel and sustained development of the social economy in all member states

2. Implementation of an effective EU sustainable finance agenda that should:

Be strongly linked to the real economy and stimulate long-term commitments, promote and foster financial activities supporting the social economy and financial inclusion of disadvantaged groups, to foster social cohesion and an inclusive growth; Promote transparency and clear communication on what is sustainable finance towards consumers, to facilitate the mobilisation of citizens savings that can help finance the ecological transition. FEBEA proposal on the EU taxonomy: <https://febea.org/febea-position-paper-on-the-eu-sustainable-finance-strategy/>

3. In terms of specific tools:

Any measures to increase citizens' participation in social finance initiatives, by mobilising their savings or investment capacity.

Complementing equity investment instruments with grant support to lower transaction cost, focusing those resources on financial intermediaries that already know/work with the green proximity and the social economy sector to enable them to diversify their financial offer, instead of trying to attract existing investment funds with little or no experience with the social economy by reducing their costs.

One exceptional tool to foster social, green and circular economy could be a green / social supporting factor taking into account the overall environmental and social impact of a loan, thus lowering capital requirements for such loans

* 2.1.2 What are the main challenges to ensure the green transition of this industrial ecosystem, as part of this pathway? Can you provide relevant data or evidence?

2000 character(s) maximum

> One critical factor to develop this enabling ecosystem is ensuring that there is an offer of social financial services in each member state that is adapted to the needs of the social economy sector. This offer currently provided by Ethical Banks and other mission-oriented financiers is well developed in some countries but is not widely available everywhere and this limits development potential of the Social Economy Sector at European Level. The missing piece is often social financial intermediaries embedded in the social economy sector themselves and that can support its development overtime.

> Today there is no shared standard of what is meant by "sustainability" in financial investments, which allows each bank or fund manager to adopt their own definitions, often rather weak and tailored to their needs.

Also, the approach to sustainable finance should not be limited to the specific financial product, but instead it should apply to all the activities proposed by a banking group, including the provision of credit and other banking activities.

Example: A "too big to fail" bank could channel large sums to investments labelled as "green" by the EU and at the same time maintain equally large, if not greater, investments in harmful sectors such as fossil fuels or armaments.

> Lack of a specific recognition on the potential role of financial intermediaries fully dedicated to social economy (ethical or social finance actors). Mainstream banks can have access to EU instruments with the risk of consuming much of the budget but not necessarily directing it to the social economy in the most efficient way.

> Bureaucratic obstacles and cumbersome rules and procedures and eliminate limits in the size and type or social economy organizations eligible for financing with EU instruments.

* 2.1.3 On which challenges are you ready to work jointly with other stakeholders for the green transition of this industrial ecosystem, as part of this pathway?

2000 character(s) maximum

FEBEA is already supporting the emergence of social finance instruments in different EU countries. FEBEA can support any EU action going in this direction, facilitating exchange of best practices and know how from existing Ethical Finance actors.

FEBEA members have a great expertise in the development and implementation of financial instruments for green proximity and social economy: they can be a key partner for the development of new EU instruments.

Ethical finance - as understood and practiced for decades by many organisations in Europe and on an international scale - is based on the idea that every financial decision has significant social and environmental consequences. Ethical Finance organisations have been applying this approach both in regards to defining their vision of society and their organisational mission as well as in daily practice in the past decades, achieving significant results and going well beyond the current definition of "sustainable" finance.

FEBEA is ready to provide examples and best practices in this domain.

Reaching and involving citizens will be a key factor for the development of any scenario: FEBEA members are strongly linked to citizens' based movements, and can therefore facilitate the engagement at local level.

Ethical finance is based on a high degree of citizens' engagement and participation in the allocation of resources. The deposits and the equity of an ethical finance organisation come from savings of its customers, which are created through activities in the real economy.

Transparency and clear, communication on what is sustainable finance could facilitate citizens' engagement and participation towards the ecological transition.

FEBEA is ready to support this process.

*** 2.1.4 What pledges and/or actions towards the green transition of the ecosystem, do you intend to present, as part of this pathway?**

2000 character(s) maximum

FEBEA's members work every day to contribute concretely to the creation of world solidarity. They rather act as an economic lever for a sustainable, active and supportive Europe, and are partners of citizens, entrepreneurs and civil society whose aspiration is change.

They act:

to place the economy at the service of citizens;

to fight against exclusion and to participate in territorial and regional development;

to give their contribution to sustainable development, solidarity and social cohesion;

to support innovative social or environmental projects.

Members of FEBEA finance:

The creation of jobs, social employment in particular

Social enterprises and social economy

The non-profit sector and participatory economy

New forms of social entrepreneurship

People or groups of people who are subject to social or professional exclusion or are unbanked;

Sustainable development: renewable sources of energy, organic farming, biodiversity, etc.;

International solidarity and fair trade.

FEBEA set itself the task of developing the ethical and social finance in Europe. Through the activities of its members and its own initiatives, FEBEA defends a committed, rigorous and ambitious vision of social and ethical finance. The Federation supports social finance, social economy entrepreneurs and all citizens and groups who work for the development of a fairer, more sustainable and more inclusive society.

To this end, the Federation has therefore set concrete objectives:

- support the exchange of information and experiences and cooperation between national networks and social economy and finance practitioners in Europe and in the European free trade area;

- represent its members at the EU institutions and the financial and political organizations and leverage different political levels and European institutions;

- concretely support the efforts of its members, including in the creation of banking and financial instruments that are necessary to accomplish their goals

2.2 Digitalising the ecosystem

* 2.2.1 What output scenarios for 2030 would benefit the development of a digital proximity and social economy industrial ecosystem, in line with the priorities of the EU Industrial Strategy and the social economy action plan?

2000 character(s) maximum

Social innovation which is the founding base of the social economy, can be developed to its full potential by fostering social economy development. This can help reap new opportunities presented by the digitalization of the economy and contribute to generate new forms of inclusive entrepreneurship among young people, underprivileged groups, migrants, women and minorities.

Public and private instruments are set-up to accompany and support the digitalisation of social economy enterprises and organisations, including upskilling and reskilling opportunities, access to software and resources etc.

* 2.2.2 What are the main challenges to ensure the digital transition of this industrial ecosystem, as part of this pathway? Can you provide relevant data or evidence?

2000 character(s) maximum

>Access to finance, equity and venture capital, and tailored support services.
>Need to upskill and reskill social economy employees and entrepreneurs.

* 2.2.3 On which challenges are you ready to work jointly with other stakeholders for the digital transition of this industrial ecosystem, as part of this pathway?

2000 character(s) maximum

>Boost access to finance for digital social economy projects.
>Engagement in alliances for the upskilling and reskilling of social economy employees and entrepreneur for the digital transition.

* 2.2.4 What pledges and/or actions towards the digital transition of the ecosystem, do you intend to present, as part of this pathway?

2000 character(s) maximum

Set up alliances with ethical finance and social finance actors to boost access to finance for digital social economy projects, allowing them to scale up.

3 General comments

3.1 What other comments would you like to give?

2000 character(s) maximum

4 Communication

Whom should we contact regarding your contribution and possible further involvement in the P-SE Transition Pathway process? We use this contact information when launching a Call for Interest for potential participants in the Stakeholder consultation workshops in Februari - June 2022.

4.1 First name

Aurora

4.2 Surname (family name)

Prospero

4.3 Function

Network Manager

4.4 Organisation

FEBEA - European Federation of Ethical and Alternative Banks and Financiers

4.5 Email

50 character(s) maximum

aurora.prospero@febea.org

Contact

[Contact Form](#)