



One Single Market, a diversity of social enterprises

- Social economy enterprises are based on shared characteristics and their main objective is to have a social and societal impact.
- As economic operators, they produce goods and services, often of general interest, but they use any surpluses primarily to achieve these social and societal objectives.
- They are run by social entrepreneurs in a responsible, transparent and innovative way, and involve staff, customers and relevant stakeholders who are impacted by their activities.
- The legal form they take may vary due to diverse national contexts. They often take the form of associations, cooperatives, foundations, mutual societies or new legal forms, and are rooted in the social economy sector.



Thanks to its Twitter account
dedicated to the social economy,
the EESC shares its activities with the broader public.

Join the 2545 followers of @EESC_SocEnt

#SocialEconomy #SocEnt



European Economic and Social Committee

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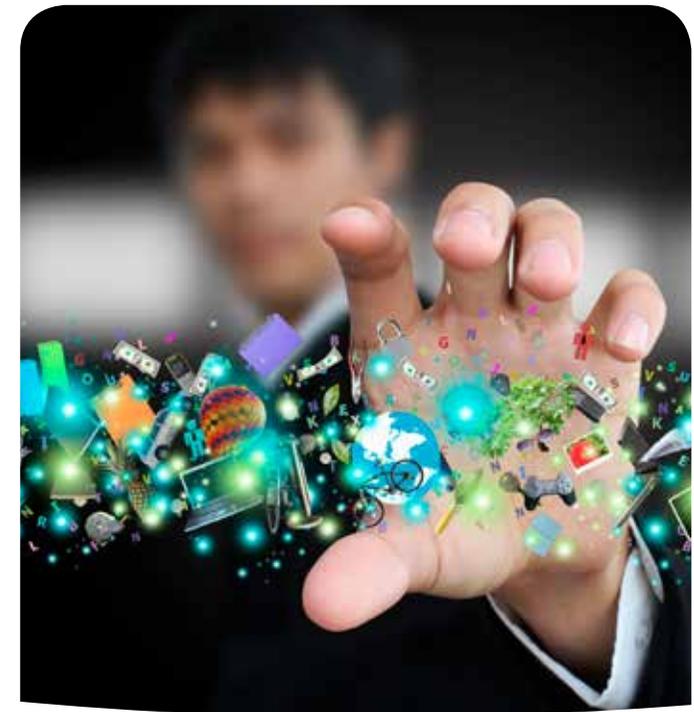
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SOCIAL ECONOMY ENTERPRISES

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Section for the Single
Market, Production
and Consumption



European Economic and Social Committee

The EESC and the Social Economy

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) has been actively involved in the European social enterprise and social economy agenda for more than 10 years and supports social enterprise growth and development as a key element of the European social model.

Since 2015, the EESC has adopted a number of opinions on social economy enterprises such as:

- **European legal framework/social economy enterprises (2019)**
- **Social economy enterprises' contribution to a more cohesive and democratic Europe (2019)**
- **Blockchain and distributed ledger technology as an ideal infrastructure for Social Economy (2019)**
- **Social economy enterprises as a driver for migrant integration (2018)**
- **The external dimension of the Social Economy (2017)**
- **Innovation as a driver of new business models (2016)**

To further unlock the potential of this sector, the EESC has called for a more supportive environment for social enterprises and for better integration of such enterprises into all EU policies. Partnerships with regional and local authorities, as well as social entrepreneurs themselves will play an important role.

Social Economy in Europe

- **13.6 million paid jobs**
- **6.3 % of the working population of the EU-28**
- **More than 82.8 million volunteers and 232 million members of cooperatives, mutuals and similar entities**
- **2.8 million entities and enterprises**

EESC activities in the field of the Social Economy

In 2015, the EESC established a study group dedicated to social economy enterprises with the following objectives:

- to monitor and evaluate political developments at EU and Member State level;
- to deal with specific subjects and, more generally, to identify concrete measures to be taken in relation to social economy enterprises;
- to collect, compile and disseminate best practices in the Member States and, where appropriate, to organise an annual Stakeholder Forum;
- to improve more generally the visibility of the sector and to work on its image; and
- to strengthen its links with think tanks that represent the sector and to continue its cooperation with the European institutions.

Furthermore, members that represent cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, foundations and social NGOs meet regularly to exchange good practices, discuss topical subjects and carry out the policy work of the EESC.

European Day of Social Economy Enterprises

Since 2016, the EESC has organised the European Day of Social Economy Enterprises on an annual basis. Its objective is twofold: on the one hand, to review the progress made in building an ecosystem for social economy enterprises in Europe and, on the other hand, to see what the next steps are for this enterprise model to be recognised and more widely disseminated.

The European Day of Social Economy Enterprises is also an excellent opportunity to give a voice to stakeholders in the sector. It allows participants to gain a comprehensive view of the situation, it helps to create synergies and it facilitates discussion about how best to effect systemic change at European level.

When the event was inaugurated in 2016, the EESC made every effort to promote the sector. In 2017, the EESC examined the role of the social economy in the future of Europe. In 2018, the EESC chose to look at the issue of scaling up the social economy. This year's event aims to make the incoming European Commission and European Parliament aware of the measures that still need to be taken to unleash the potential of the social economy enterprises.

2018

- **23 speakers**
- **131 participants**
- **177 visitors on live stream**
- **679 mentions and 1.2 million potential reach on Twitter**

2017

- **22 speakers**
- **132 participants**

2016

- **21 speakers**
- **134 participants**

