



**European Economic and Social Committee**

**CONFERENCE  
ON**

**"PERSPECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR THE NEW COMMISSION  
AND EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT:  
THE SOCIAL ECONOMY AND SOCIAL INNOVATION AS DRIVERS OF  
COMPETITIVENESS, GROWTH AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING"**

**Co-organised by the Social Economy Category, the SOC and INT Sections of the EESC**

**Brussels, 1 October 2014**

**CONCLUSIONS**

- The Conference participants commend the European Commission and the European Parliament for the progress in the promotion of the social economy and social enterprises achieved during the 2010-2014 mandate;
- In order to continue along the same path, the participants encourage both institutions to strengthen their capacities. The Commission should provide the 'Entrepreneurship and Social Economy Unit' in DG Enterprise and Industry with the necessary human and financial resources to ensure that the specificities of social economy enterprises are taken into account in all EU policies. For its part, the European Parliament should renew and strengthen the Social Economy Intergroup;
- There was unanimity that the main priority for the Commission is to adopt a Social Business Initiative (SBI) II, which would address and promote all types of social economy enterprises, in a holistic way and create the right policy, financial and legal ecosystem. The conclusions of the EESC Social Enterprise Project provide a valuable roadmap to this effect;
- The participants call on the Council to speed up the adoption of the European Foundation Statute and on the Commission to adopt proposals for the European Mutual Statute and the European Association Statute. Their adoption is indispensable for these types of enterprise being able to compete on a level playing field with other economic operators;
- There was agreement on the necessity for the Commission to rapidly publish its guide on how the new public procurement directives can be leveraged in order to promote social economy enterprises and social innovation. The publication of such a guide is urgent as transposition of the directives is rapidly advancing in some Member States;
- The Commission is also encouraged to work more closely with Member States in order to ensure that all opportunities for the social economy generated by EU initiatives are fully seized upon at the national level (Structural Funds, Public Procurement, social investment funds, etc.);
- The participants agreed that one area that deserves the particular attention of the Commission and Member States, is to ensure a coordinated approach to the collection and use of statistics;

- The EU should integrate the social economy dimension into the post 2015 development agenda;
  - The European Commission is called upon to intensify its exchanges and collaboration on social economy issues with the leading international organisations (United Nations, OECD, World Bank, ILO, etc.);
  - It is reaffirmed that the social economy and social enterprises will remain a key priority for the EESC in the foreseeable future.
-