



Improving entrepreneurship through social economy and smart specialisation

22 February 2018 (16:30-18:00)

Crowne Plaza Hotel & Covent Garden

16:30-16:35 - Welcome and workshop introduction

- Alison Hunter, Moderator, Economic and Public Policy Consultancy (EPPC)

16:35-17:10 - Applying smart specialisation strategies (S3) to the social economy – panel discussion

Session Aim: insights into how S3 can be used to support the social economy

Moderator: Alison Hunter

- Patrick Klein, Team Leader for Social Economy, Clusters, social economy & entrepreneurship, DG Grow (European Commission)
- Manuel Palazuelos, S3 Platform, JRC (EC). *S3 as a tool to foster transversal areas of the economy.*
- Ilari Havukainen, Project Manager Regional Council of Lapland. *Contribution of Social Economy to S3 implementation in Lapland.*
- Mikel Irujo, Delegate Navarra in Brussels and COR member. *S3 and social economy in Navarra.*

17:10-17:40 - Entrepreneurship & Social Economy – roundtable

Session Aim: identifying key actions for the EU's post-2020 agenda, to position the EU's social economy in the regional innovation landscape

Moderator: Alison Hunter

- Alain Coheur, Vice-president Social Economy Europe. *Social Economy to foster entrepreneurship.*
- Barbara Moreschi, Coopfond (Cooperatives Europe). *Coopstartup: fostering innovation through cooperative start-ups creation.*
- Miguel Ugalde, Mondragon Corporation, CEO MAPSA. *What the social economy companies and stakeholders need.*
- Tanja Häyrynen, Arctic Smart Rural Communities Cluster. *Social Economy Enabling Sustainable Rural Clusters.*

17:40-17:45 – What regions can do to foster innovation through cooperation

- Pirita Lindholm, Director ERRIN

17:45-18:00 - Summary of panel and roundtable discussions and Q&A

- Alison Hunter, Economic and Public Policy Consultancy (EPPC)





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Why is it an important issue?

European Social economy comprises 2 million enterprises and represents 10% of all European enterprises, while employing over 14 million paid employees (6.5% of the working population in the EU). Despite this, the EU's Innovation Union, derived from the Europe 2020 Strategy, pays little attention to the role of this important sector in driving and supporting the Innovation Union. In the 2014-2020 programming period, significant EU investment is attached to supporting Regional Policy (€352 billion) and Research and Innovation policy (H2020, close to €80 billion). Across these packages, investing in innovation is a key objective. The 2021-27 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) is expected to prioritise the EU's continued drive to support innovation-oriented growth. The social economy should form a critical part of this drive.

At the same time, more than 120 regions have developed their *Smart Specialisation Strategies* (S3). This workshop will explore how to combine the efforts of S3 and the social economy to optimise efforts in achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. This vision is already recognised by many EU regions. The time is ripe to better define and position the role of the social economy in the EU's future S3 agenda. **The workshop seeks to find common links between the EU's social economy and S3, and how these can foster and optimise new directions for EU entrepreneurship.**

What questions would you like to discuss? What can be the possible outcomes (for the Commission and participants)?

S3 is a place-based approach characterised by the identification of strategic areas for intervention based both on the analysis of the strengths and potential of the economy and on an **Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP)** with wide stakeholder involvement. It is outward-looking and embraces a broad view of innovation including but certainly not limited to technology-driven approaches, supported by effective monitoring mechanisms. Some regions are already using the EDP to discover the potential of the social economy in their region, and articulate measures to promote it as a global strategy to promote the region's economy and welfare.

On the other hand, the Commission Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES) issued a set of [recommendations](#) for concrete actions to tackle the issues currently preventing the social economy and social enterprises from working to their full potential.

During the workshop the following topics will be explored:

- How to develop social economy clusters
- How to create European value chains of social economy enterprises belonging to different regions in Europe, and improve the cooperation between them
- How can S3 act as a link between social economy enterprises all over Europe





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Invited speakers will expose the needs and challenges they are facing to improve a better cooperation among the social economy enterprises in Europe in order to strengthen the social economy sector. The speakers will also explore the S3 as a tool to foster that cooperation.

We need to better understand good practices from different regions in this field. In addition, we need to break silos between social economy and innovation regional policies such as S3, and demonstrate that S3 may be used as a very open strategy to develop not only “traditional” sectors, but some transversal ones, such as the social economy.

Together with organisers (Social Economy Europe and ERRIN), the workshop seeks to explore the potential and demand for improving linkages and networks between different regions who are seeking to optimise their innovation potential through combining S3 and the social economy. Most importantly, social economy organisations will be invited to share examples of current practice in this area and to explore future potential for joining efforts through, for example, engaging in innovation-driven, inter-regional projects, and thematic platforms.

Background information

The goals of Smart Specialisation¹

Smart specialisation is an innovative policy concept which emphasizes the principle of prioritisation in a vertical logic (to favour some technologies, fields, population of firms) and defines a method to identify such desirable areas for innovation policy intervention. Its rationale involves both the fact that, even in the information age, the logic of specialisation is intact, particularly for small entities such as regional economies in Europe and the argument that the task of identification (of what should be prioritised) is very difficult and therefore needs a sophisticated policy design.

The importance of the global economy and innovation networks calls for a regional innovation policy that goes beyond regional and national borders. Collaborating in S3 countries/regions combine complementary strengths, exploit their competences in R&I, get necessary research capacity, overcome lack of critical mass as well as fragmentation and access to the global value chains. One of the drivers for transnational and inter-regional collaboration in S3 relates to the attempts to overcome the lack of public investment for R&I, where the alignment of S3 agendas and usage of ESIF for joint S3 initiatives can help overcome capability failures hindering innovation. Furthermore, cooperation across borders is an important source for new ideas, innovative approaches and skills, which can facilitate transfer of knowledge and capabilities, as well as accelerating learning processes.

¹ <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/-/the-goals-of-smart-specialisation>





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What the Commission does on social innovation²?

- **Networking** - helps organisations across Europe to connect, learn from each other, and share experiences through the [Social Innovation Community](#) portal.
- **Competition** - every year the EC organises the [European Social Innovation Competition](#) to source and support new solutions to societal challenges, and thereby raise awareness about social innovation. Other European contests also support social innovators, such as the [RegioStars Awards](#), and the [Social Innovation Tournament](#).
- **Funding** – EC offers direct funding to support social innovation through the [Employment and Social Innovation Programme](#), [Horizon 2020](#), particularly under the [SME Instrument](#) which is open to social enterprises, or the [Collective Awareness Platforms](#). Social innovation may also be funded in your country or region under the EU structural and investment funds - [Guide to Social Innovation](#). Moreover, the Commission also offers seed funding for the development of innovative ideas that address social challenges through the [Social Challenges Platform](#).
- **Ecosystems** – EC improves the conditions for social innovation and social enterprises in Europe, also to attract private investors. Learn about the [Social Business Initiative](#) and the [Start-Up & Scale-Up Initiative](#). They build on the conclusions of an [external expert group \(GECES\)](#) and a [mapping of social enterprises' ecosystems](#) in each of the 28 EU countries.
- **Impact** – EC gathers and disseminate evidence about the benefits of social innovation and methodologies for result measurement. See the report [Strengthening social innovation in Europe Journey to effective assessment and metrics](#) (2012), the work on [social impact](#) completed within the [Social Business Initiative](#) or [research projects](#) carried out for that purpose.
- **Incubation** - we support incubation structures for social innovation in Europe, through EU-wide networks of incubators such as [Transition](#) and [Benisi](#).

² http://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/policy/social_en

