



# Global Action: Peer-learning Partnerships



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## Mainstreaming the Social and Solidarity Economy: Perspectives from the Peer-learning Partnerships

2 December 2021 | 13:00- 15:30 CEST

### SUMMARY

The final PLP event '*Mainstreaming the Social and Solidarity Economy: Perspectives from the Peer-learning Partnerships*' took place on 2 December 2021. The event brought together over 200 participants representing a variety of Social and Solidarity (SSE) ecosystem stakeholders and all six Peer-Learning Partnerships (PPLs). With the support of some 25 contributors the event was dynamic and insightful.

The objective of the event, which marked the end of the Peer-learning Partnerships work stream of the Action , was to present the findings of all six PLP consortia. It was also an opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss the findings of the PLPs in light of three of the event's central themes: a) *Building better-enabling ecosystems to support the SSE*, b) *Connecting the SSE in the EU and globally* and c) *Raising the visibility of the SSE and its impact*.

Opening remarks were made by **Karen MAGUIRE**, Head of Local Employment, Skills and Social Innovation (LESI) Division, OECD who welcomed the participants and highlighted the success of the PLPs and their innovative approach to gathering data and sharing it among the participating organisations. **Stefan SCHLEUNING**, Head of Unit, Industrialised countries and foreign policy support, EU Service for Foreign Policy Instruments provided welcome remarks on behalf of the European Commission. Mr SCHLEUNING made a reference to the rising importance of the social economy and PLP findings in light of the upcoming EU Social Economy Action Plan.

The first session "*What did we learn from the Peer-learning Partnerships?*" was moderated by **Max BULAKOVSKIY** from the OECD and showcased representatives of all 6 PLP consortia.

- **Gianluca PASTORELLI** from DIESIS Network presented the findings of the [SILK PLP](#) around the internationalisation of the PLP and specifically public policies and SSEOs strategies. The findings focused on the role of "collaborators", intangible assets, which are more important for SSEOs compared to conventional businesses , and the importance to develop relevant enabling environments and public policies.
- **Mariana NUNES** representing the [ImpactHub consortium](#) presented findings analysing internationalisation and the role of enablers and how the characteristics identified within women-led SEs can open new opportunities to SSE organisations. Findings confirmed the need to promote

flexibility to adapt to different contexts, the roles of networks and alliances as facilitators of the internationalisation and especially the women principles that apply to SSE internationalisation.

- **Carlos LOZANO** presented the findings of the [PL4SE-PLP consortium](#) led by CEPES looking at SSE legal frameworks. The PLP found that the social economy encompasses various legal entities driven by shared values recognised by law. Advanced legal frameworks embed the economic, social and entrepreneurial management of the social economy model in the norms regulating both the markets and the economic operators and the main socio-economic and environmental agendas. Mr LOZANO concluded that adapted and specific support programmes are part of the legal ecosystem for the social economy and that they help to regulate and unleash the potential of social economy.
- **Ingo MICHELFELDER** presented the findings of the consortium led by French Impact looking at the role the Sustainable Developments Goals (SDGs) can play in [Social Impact Measurement \(SIM\) for the SSE](#). The consortium concluded the SDGs can be a valuable tool for SIM, presented reasons for and against. The PLP provided examples of how the SDGs can be used from a technical perspective and highlighted the need to contextualize measurement approaches to local conditions. The PLP suggests the development of a toolbox with best practices, rather than a single prescriptive approach and investors should demand the use of the SDGs in SIM to increase their use.
- **Ben CARPENTER** discussed how the Social Value consortium applied peer-learning around [Impact Measurement and Management \(IMM\) specifically focused on stakeholder engagement](#). The findings emphasised the need for meaningful stakeholder engagement and the need to generate shared insights through dialogue. The consortium also focused on stimulation of capacity and skills to engage stakeholders and public policies that enable the conditions for such skills to be fully utilised.
- **Assiri VALDES QUEROL** showcased the findings of the [Respond, Rebuild and Reinvent](#) consortium that collaborated with 9 cities to identify the elements of the local SSE ecosystems and how they were affected by COVID-19. The pandemic pushed for local administrations being more proactive in strengthening SSE ecosystems. City administrations effectively set up and sustain platforms to convene and connect the SSE ecosystem and enhance learning among them. The environment of survival generated by the pandemic created new interactions and created new dynamics and more flexible ways of collaboration with the SSE.

Session 2: *Peer-learning Partnerships Breakout Discussions* looked at three topics covered through parallel breakouts. Its objective was to focus on the practical application of the findings of the PLPs for policy makers. The breakouts featured representatives of the PLP consortia, invited policy makers and policy area experts. This session also allowed to build discussion on the findings presented by the six consortia. The summary of each session was presented by the rapporteur selected for each breakout.

**Alexander KESSELRING**, rapporteur from breakout “*Building Better Enabling Ecosystems*” presented the summary of discussion which included:

- Legal frameworks and policy initiatives can reciprocally influence each other, in a virtuous loop. This works properly when national, regional and local levels dialogue to co-construct an ecosystem able to secure proper social economy development. Mutual recognition of the different functions and roles plays an essential role in such a process.

- SSE ecosystem coalitions with city administrations as enablers and hosts could be included in the development of national strategies, policies and legal frameworks on the SSE. This close interaction makes them aware of the diversity of SSE actors and their roles/contributions in the ecosystem as well as their challenges and support needs. Creating effective legal and policy frameworks relies on this knowledge and existing feedback loops between public authorities and SSE platforms.
- SSE ecosystems are often concentrated in major cities. City administrations therefore have an important intermediary role to build on national policies, legal entities and funds for their SSE ecosystems. The adoption of new legal entities (created on national or EU level) needs promotion and guidance to ensure adoption and monitor the actual use and benefits for SSE organisations.
- Cross-sector alliances can respond to societal challenges with social innovation, increased capacity and better integrated activities. SSE actors who play an important role in this process still lack recognition and visibility to be able to gain access to support structures that exist for SMEs.

**Aneta QURAI SHY**, rapporteur from breakout “*Connecting the SSE in the EU and Globally*” presented the summary of discussion of the breakout and specifically:

- Internationalisation of the SSE sector is taking place and will continue to take place but needs the ongoing support of intergovernmental organisations such as the OECD, EU, UN conglomerate as well as governments worldwide in a consolidated effort.
- SSE organisations have demonstrated a way of internationalising that is more adapted to addressing current environmental and social challenges. SSEs play an important role in this new form of internationalisation and should be part of the negotiation table.
- The importance of intermediaries in the internationalisation process since they can provide access to actors and relevant tools.
- Recognising and fostering female principles such as collaboration, culture of listening, bottom-up approach and flexibility, can help build successful local partnerships, adapt solutions to local needs and build relevant narratives that can inspire others and open new opportunities for the internationalisation process.

**John SHERMAN**, rapporteur from breakout “*Raising SSE Visibility and its Impact*” summarised the main points of discussion:

- The SDGs and SDG Impact Standards offer policy makers and government agencies (national and subnational) pathways to engage the SSE and emerging and conventional market economy actors including SMEs in using a sustainability framework in planning and implementing economic activities, and in assessing the non-financial impacts of such activities.
- There are numerous approaches to SIM, most of which are harmonised but offer different levels of specificity or address different economic actors. These tools and frameworks can help expand the SSE and encourage meaningful stakeholder engagement, and impact measurement and management, within the SSE. Rather than recommend a single approach, practitioners can find the approach that works best for their context and needs, but they should check to see if the approach involves meaningful stakeholder engagement as described in the SV US PLP white papers.

- Meaningful stakeholder engagement, and its principles and practices, are required by the SDGs and the SDG Impact Standards. Other impact frameworks (e.g., Common Approach) apply equally to the SSE in both emerging and conventional market economies.
- Governments could use public policies to increase visibility and help actors apply relevant impact measurement standards and find ways to engage a variety of stakeholders. Some governments (e.g., Spain, Mexico, Slovenia, and Korea) are already doing so or planning to do so in different ways.
- There is a need to build and strengthen the capacities and skills of all stakeholders (e.g., government, SSE and market economy actors, employees and community) to engage in assessing impact and better understanding where impact is built.

**Antonella NOYA** in her closing comments highlighted the need for more opportunities for peer learning in the future. PLPs provide a unique opportunity to learn and share, while identifying common patterns and local specificities around the world. Prior to closing she also reminded participants of the upcoming outputs of the OECD Global Action in 2022 and invited the participants to join the Global Action Final Conference on 14-16 December 2022.