BuiCaSuS
Final Synthesis Report

WP5.3 - Deliverable 5.3.2.

Final Version

30 March 2023

**Funded by
the European Union**

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Introduction

From May 2021 to April 2023, partners form Latvia, France, Sweden and Spain engaged in an experience exchange programme on Social Innovation. Funded by the European Commission (EC), this transnational project was to give a new push to the conceptual reflection and practical application of social innovation and the policy options to foster social innovation ecosystems. This is the final report which captures some of the experiences and main messages for the future.

1   The mandate and the objectives of BuiCaSuS

BuiCaSuS has aimed to foster transnational cooperation to set up or consolidate national competence centres for social innovation, in close alignment with the current and future programming activities of the European Social Fund and the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) programme in selected regions across Europe: France, Latvia, Spain, Sweden. The project comprised seven partners from the four countries and involved more than twenty organisations. To enhance mutual learning and sharing, it brought together experienced and less experienced organisations from the start.

The BuiCaSuS project is one of the consortia funded under the European Commission's EASI programme 2014-2020. The EASI consortia, including BuiCaSuS, are part of a broader effort to promote social innovation and inclusive growth in Europe. The project was mandated to strengthen the capacity of regional stakeholders to develop and implement social innovation initiatives that address complex societal challenges in line with the call for proposals VP/2020/010.

The general objective of BuiCaSuS was to foster transnational cooperation and mutual learning to create or strengthen institutions and organizations acting as national competence centres to nurture an ecosystem of social innovation in the respective Member states. The project was focused on the following specific objectives:

o **Mapping** the strengths, weaknesses and inspirational initiatives of partners' social innovation ecosystems as well as initiated and/or replicated social innovation initiatives and foster a comparative view and experience exchange.

o Learning from other countries how they practically promote social innovation for addressing social needs and **piloting and upscaling** social innovation projects in between partner countries.

- o Facilitating cooperation and experience exchange on methods, tools and approaches for promoting social innovation between the institutions and actors in four partner countries aiming to **building the capacity** to foster the emergence of innovative approaches and establish national capacity building priority areas.

- o Developing **strategies and road maps** for the creation or strengthening of Centres of Competences for Social Innovation in the project countries that can be developed with the support of the ESF in the coming years.

2 The process of BuiCaSuS

Mapping

One of the workstreams of the consortium has been the mapping of the current situation of the social innovation panorama in all four partner countries. In the first months of the project phase, the BuiCaSuS team had intense discussions on the concept of Social Innovation and how to align it in a shared understanding for mapping the situation of the SI ecosystems in the four countries. These deliberations have been contrasted in an expert workshop in mid-October 2021. The outcome was a Working paper on concepts and mapping methodology. Divided into two parts, it discusses key concept – namely social innovation, ecosystems, upscaling, the role of the public administration in social innovation and social services – and then defines the mapping methodology that was to generate the background papers on the country situation. The mapping was undertaken in early 2022 and has generated four country background papers which had been widely contrasted by the respective actors at national level.

The four mapping exercises in the BuiCaSuS partner countries have contributed to an experience exchange both within the respective countries, amongst the four partners and their organizations, as well as beyond in the international conference of Madrid in October 2022. Participants have been sensitized to assess specific key features of their own national social innovation ecosystem, such as legal provisions and policy frameworks, financing instruments, support structures and evaluation methods. The new programming cycle of the European Funds, as well as the transformative experiences of the current implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) allows for setting the issue of social innovation firmly on the

agenda in order to create more resilient responses to wicked problems and, ultimately, building more sustainable societies as envisaged in the Agenda 2030.

	Results of the Work package 2 **Mapping the state of social innovation ecosystems** https://buicasus.eu/topic/mapping/

Piloting and upscaling

Another workstream of the BuiCaSuS consortium focused on promoting a joint transnational work on a practical application to social innovation, enabling Latvia and Spain to each prepare for the replication or upscaling of social innovation projects, taking inspiration from mature Swedish and French projects.

Social innovation project owners, and their respective mentors, were selected by the partners in Spain and in Latvia, to benefit from two main activities:

- Learning expeditions, in France and in Sweden
- Online training workshops

The learning expeditions took place in April and May 2022, enabling 2 Latvian and 8 Spanish pilot-projects to travel to Sweden and France to benefit from the experience of mature social innovation projects whose project owners were able to share some good advice on how to scale up. These expeditions provided an opportunity for the participants to discover the different upscaling strategies existing in other European countries, specifically regarding how social initiatives and public services deal with certain social issues as homelessness, unemployment or climate change, at a larger scale.

In France, participants observed how 3 social innovation projects managed to increase their social impact by replicating their model in other territories and/or by doing a strong advocacy work to raise issues at a political level through the leverage of a big network and ultimately to change the legal framework. While in Sweden, the participants met 2 mature social innovation projects in Stockholm, that focus on exclusion prevention, social food stores and substance abuse rehabilitation.

A few months later, four online workshops were offered to the pilot projects, so that they could work concretely and more precisely on their own upscaling projects. During these, Avise organized sessions around presentations, interventions from different experts and concrete exercises, for the implementors and mentors to prepare their upscaling strategy. The four sessions approached 3 different issues: social impact assessment, upscaling theory and business model.

Results of the Work package 3
Practice: replication / upscaling

https://buicasus.eu/topic/replicating-and-upscaling/

Capacity Building

To make social innovation happen, active support is beneficial throughout the social innovation process. This was shown in work package 4 that centred on tools and methods for social innovation. The project went out to collect findings from an analysis of best practices that support social innovation. It presented examples from organisations supporting social innovation in Spain, France, Latvia, and Sweden. The very different actors provide insights, exemplifying how cross-sectoral co-creation can be supported in social innovation. The examples of best-practices for support throughout the social innovation process presented during the project in online webinars and reports include methods, tools, and approaches to support the different elements of the social innovation process and examples at both grass root, societal and systemic levels.

One example is the Agirre Lehendakaria Center, the Basque Country's social innovation lab in Spain. It involves people affected by the societal challenge through a method called "community listening process" in the entire process from needs description onwards. Another example is Avise, a competence centre for social innovation in France, which offers support organisations the Cap Impact training program with various tools to measure social impact. Support organisations can then, in turn, support various social innovation projects and the ecosystem.

These examples can inspire other support actors to continue to identify and facilitate solutions to societal challenges and to make them sustainable. The work also aims at showing which support is needed within the ecosystem for social innovation and what competences that help support social innovation on a systemic level.

Research shows that social innovation encompasses several crucial elements in the process of developing and establishing social innovations – including identifying and understanding societal challenges, mobilisation of actors and resources, idea generation, implementation, and value creation. These elements do not necessarily occur in chronological order. They are often interwoven and iterated. Innovation is often reduced to a matter of generating new ideas, while the process is far more multi-faceted when aspiring for social change. It is therefore important to support all elements of the process.

This work package also gives forward-looking recommendations. There is a need for more knowledge on how to support the different elements of the social innovation process. Each element can benefit from active support, with suitable methods, resources, and actors. There is also a need for support of co-creation and cross-sectoral cooperation. Finally, it's crucial to support the involvement of people affected by societal challenges. If we want to support social innovation processes, we need to facilitate processes where relevant actors co-create. There is a shared view on the need to co-create, but now we need to move forward and start doing it – with the support of research on what works.

Results of the Work package 4
Tools and methods for social innovation practice

https://buicasus.eu/topic/tools-and-methods/

Conferences

Two conferences brought members from the four partner countries and beyond together. The participants included members of government, including managing authorities of the European Social Fund plus, as well as social innovation practitioners, academics, civil society service providers and representatives of the European Commission.

Mid-term conference – October 2022 in Madrid, Spain

More than a hundred participants gathered in October in Madrid to exchange lessons on social innovation. The Midterm conference of the BuiCaSuS consortium brought together participants from France, Sweden, Latvia, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Lithuania, Italy, Poland, Bulgaria, and Romania. The first day gave the opportunity to a cross-section of Spanish stakeholders from both public administration and third sector operators to participate. The second day was conceived as a working session in a smaller circle.

The first day was dedicated to exposing some of the findings of the work process in the consortium. Amongst them were the mapping exercise, the piloting of upscaling experiences, and the sharing of best practices in tools to support social innovation initiatives. Also, it gave room to listen to keynote speeches on a vision of why social innovation should permeate all public policies, the relation between social innovation and deepening democratic participation and new approaches to undertake evaluation oriented towards collective sense-making rather than administrative control. Furthermore, two roundtable discussions centred on the role of the state in social innovation, as well as on the design of financing vehicles for social innovation.

The second day centred on the institutional design criteria for existing or future national competence centres of Social innovation. First, the four representatives of the Managing Authorities of the European Fund lay out past implementation and the status of social innovation in the new programming cycle 2021-27. Then a case study on the Portuguese Mission unit exposed both the successful Portuguese experience, as well as current debates on the restructuring and the renegotiation of the governance of the Unit. Also, the newly instated European Competence Centre presented its mission statement and work programme. Finally, group work inquired into the conditions and design criteria for national support structures to innovation ecosystems. This work is now to be extended in the last of the work packages of the BuiCaSus consortium which is to prepare road maps for setting up or consolidating national Competence Centres.

Final Conference – February 2023 in Riga, Latvia

On February 16-17, 2023, Riga, Latvia hosted the final BuiCaSuS conference, bringing together experts and social innovation ecosystem players from Spain, France, Sweden, Italy, Austria, Greece, Belgium, Lithuania, Latvia, as well as representatives

from the European Commission. Filled with insightful conversations, thought-provoking ideas, and opportunities for networking and collaboration, the conference presented the BuiCaSuS results as well as translational learnings on institutionalizing support to social innovation ecosystems.

The first day was focused on a broader perspective in understanding social innovation, involving social innovation practitioners as well as managing authorities of different countries. The second day was centred on the road maps and strategies for existing or future National competence centres of social innovation along with foresight on how EC policy, financing, and facilitated workspaces will reinforce social innovation practices in the next planning period.

The BuiCaSuS Conferences

https://buicasus.eu/topic/events/

3 The outcomes of BuiCaSuS: National Roadmaps

As a preparation stage for national strategies and action plans for national Competence Centres for Social Innovation (CCSI) institutionalization or consolidation in each project state, a common **analytical grid** was developed to indicate criteria and factors to consider while establishing effective and sustainable roadmaps. The criteria included identification of the mandate, governance, structure, role, composition and actors, task, mission, and working method as well as options for a future work plan that shall be implemented for CCSI in the partner countries.

Roadmaps for Competence centres for Social Innovation
- analytical grid
- roadmaps for France, Latvia, Sweden and Spain

https://buicasus.eu/topic/national-plans/

The analytical grid was built upon a screening of international and national practices for social innovation governance, analysis of several advanced national social

innovation ecosystems, the vision of the European Commission on the NCCSI's role and development, and analysis of experiences of CCSIs and organisations similar to CCSIs in their core activities already developed in other countries. The findings of the mapping and piloting activities that have been undertaken within BuiCaSuS were also considered while developing the structure of the analytical grid.

Defined policy options and institutional design criteria facilitated the effort of the project members of each partner country to prepare the national strategies and action plans for the CCSIs. The National Roadmaps are the result of broader stakeholder dialogues at the respective Member States that engaged social innovation practitioners, policy makers and experts relevant to the national contexts.

France

The French social innovation ecosystem benefits from various favourable conditions: the concept of social innovation has legislative recognition (SSE Law, 2014); it is incorporated into regional and national policies; social innovators can get guidance from various actors (incubators, accelerators or even public support schemes) but also financial support from private and public funders. Yet challenges remain to strengthen this ecosystem, broaden social innovation's recognition and its incorporation into public policies. The roadmap for the French Competence Centre for Social Innovation highlights three main challenges: better supporting and funding social innovation throughout the development process (from emergence to scale-up), breaking down barriers around social innovation initiatives to encourage systemic change and better integrating feedback from other European countries.

France did not have to create a Competence Centre for Social Innovation or BuiCaSuS since Avise already met most of the European Commission's expectations for these centres: ecosystem capacity building (tools, support, and awareness-raising); networking (best practice sharing, stakeholder community management); transnational knowledge transfers on the development of social innovations (Avise was a member of several European network centres before the creation of the network of 27 CCSIs); capitalising on best practices for projects funded by the ESF (Avise has been the ESF's intermediate body for the Social and Solidarity Economy and social innovation since 2004).

The French CCSI roadmap is therefore directly based on the broader Avise roadmap adopted by its governance bodies. The aspects of the CCSI to be reinforced or

launched in 2023-2027 are based on broad-based work on Avise's strategic positioning; the overview of the social innovation ecosystem in France drawn from the mapping and analysis report produced as part of Work Package 2 of BuiCaSuS; hearings of key stakeholders in the ecosystem (ministers, support bodies, network leaders representing project owners, private financers, researchers, public-sector social innovators, etc.). The four main strategic focus of the French CCSI, as described in its roadmap, are: tool provision, community management, support and funding for the social innovation ecosystem.

Avise has been mandated by the French State in this role of National Competence Centre for Social Innovation, through its national ESF+ managing authority (the *Délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle* - the Government Employment and Vocational Training Agency, or DGEFP).

Founded in 2002, Avise is a non-profit organisation whose by-laws define the governing bodies (the strategic council and the executive board) that set its strategic goals and adopt its annual action plan and budget. The Strategic Council is made up of four major categories of participants: the Banque des Territoires (the public-sector bank that supports social innovation in France), the main SSE and social innovation network leaders, major SSE enterprises and qualified SSE and social innovation specialists (particularly representatives of local support structures). Members of the Strategic Council and the Executive board serve three-year terms and are elected by the Avise General Assembly.

Beyond Avise's general governance, its various programs also have their own dedicated governance bodies. As for the French Competence Centre for Social Innovation, run by Avise, it has set two goals for which it must develop dedicated, partnership-based, multi-stakeholder governance:

– contributing to directing ESF+ credits to more social innovations, particularly credits under Priority Area 6 of the ESF+ National Programme, which is dedicated to social innovation and offers 95% joint financing for projects (through collaborations with DGEFP, which is responsible for these ESF+ credits);
– doing more to break down barriers between public- and private-sector stakeholders, researchers, social and solidarity-based enterprises, and citizens in social innovation in France.

	The BuiCaSuS outcomes for France https://buicasus.eu/topic/france

Latvia

In Latvia, the concept of social innovation is relatively new, and the possibility of creating a Latvian Competence Centre for Social Innovations remains an open question. Currently, several important participants of the social innovation ecosystem in Latvia can be identified, fostering an enabling environment for social innovation development. While various organizations have provided direct and non-direct support for social innovations, none have offered comprehensive assistance throughout all stages of development. There is a lack of systematic national-level activities aimed at strengthening the social innovation ecosystem, which underscores the importance of coordinated action to support the ecosystem development as such. This role would be highly relevant to other foreseen CCSI activities; however, it is important to ensure that any activities and services implemented do not duplicate or compete with those already existing in the sector.

While the national CCSI has not yet been established in Latvia, its institutional design and mandate has not been defined at the national level. The BuiCaSuS project did not define the potential institutional structure of the Latvian CCSI, as it is assumed that an existing institution with a successful track record in the social innovation ecosystem and relevant operational structure for functions implementation could be entrusted with the functions of the CCSI. Instead, the project focused on defining the vision, mission, goals, roles, and tasks of the national CCSI, as well as its target groups. To enhance the organization's stability, at the strategy level, the operational potential of the CCSI has been carefully coordinated with the management plans of various grant programs, projects, and financial instruments.

- The **vision** of the Latvian CCSI is to be an enabler of social innovation that listens, provides support and help to identify solutions to those in need. The CCSI became a recognized leader in the field of social innovations, coordinating the development and use of social innovation competencies to ensure the growth of the entire social innovation ecosystem;

- The **mission** is to create an environment that facilitates the development of social innovation providing a unified, coordinated, strong, and comprehensive social innovation expertise;
- The **strategic goal** is to provide constant support to stakeholders of the social innovation ecosystem, increasing the availability of innovative cross-sectoral solutions to solve problems important to society.

The Latvian CCSI strategy focuses on three target groups:

- The CCSI coordinates and promotes the development, cooperation, and support for the **supporters of social innovation**, which include NGO, municipalities, private entities, and others;
- CCSI directly and indirectly supports **social innovators**, such as social and public service providers, who receive services from supporters of social innovations. This support enables them to effectively address social problems through social innovations;
- The **final beneficiaries** are the indirect target group, including disadvantaged societal groups, local communities, and society as a whole, for whom social innovation solves specific social problems.

The Latvian CCSI's roadmap outlines 5 functions aligned with those defined by the EC for social innovation competence centres: CCSI establishment, including delegation of the mandate and personnel recruitment, capacity building, network creation, knowledge transfer, and synergy promotion. To accomplish these functions, the Latvian CCSI strategy focuses on two primary tasks:

1. To inspire, help, encourage, and enable stakeholders to better use the opportunities, benefits, and success factors of specific social innovations;
2. To promote the application of successful proven innovative approaches or partnerships on a large scale.

As per the decision outlined in the protocol of the Cabinet of Ministers concerning the BuiCaSuS project's implementation, the Society Integration Foundation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Welfare, is tasked with preparing an informative report for the Cabinet of Ministers on the results of the project. This report will evaluate the possibilities of ensuring the Latvian CCSI's sustained operation after the project concludes and will take into account the project's outcomes.

Furthermore, in partnership with the Ministry of Welfare, the development of the regulatory framework for the ESF+ programme "Support for new approaches in the

provision of community-based social services (innovations)" have been initiated. This effort aims to promote social innovation in the social services sector and to develop modern, responsive social services that cater to human needs. The plan is to not only create and pilot new services but also to strengthen the capacity and collaboration ability of social innovators. Additionally, support for social innovation will be provided throughout all stages of development, and efforts will be made to raise awareness in the ecosystem and society about social innovations, its impact, and significance.

The BuiCaSuS outcomes for Latvia

https://buicasus.eu/topic/latvia

Spain

The Spanish roadmap acknowledges the importance of social innovation in providing new solutions to social problems and needs, particularly in the changing contexts of modern societies. It suggests that a CCSI could play a vital role in creating favourable environments for social innovation, supporting initiatives, connecting actors, and promoting learning processes. It recognizes the existing richness of self-standing initiatives at local and regional level, while it laments the lack of interconnectedness to generate a critical mass in ecosystems or innovation clusters, at national level.

It proposes the creation of a *CERISS Centro Estatal de Referencia en Innovación y Servicios Sociales* (State Reference Centre for Innovation and Social Services) with the following mission:

> *The mission of CERISS is to promote an ecosystem of social innovation that dynamizes, in an open and integrated way, a set of actors, methodologies and actions in order to address common challenges in the field of social services in Spain. The vision is to have a support system for the development of modern social services that respond to the changing needs of the population and foster innovation on a continuous basis.*

The roadmap proposes creating a Centre of Reference in Social Innovation and Social Services (CERISS) in Spain, outlining its objectives, areas of work, and actions. It argues that such a centre is needed to promote innovation namely in social services and social care. This had already been enacted in the draft law, the *'Anteproyecto de Ley de condiciones básicas para la igualdad en el acceso y disfrute de los servicios sociales'*, which emphasizes the need to modernize social services and promote innovation and new technologies. The roadmap defines the following premises:

- It gives a fundamental role to public action, in its role of leading, convening and driving forward.
- The focus of attention is on the field of social services.
- It proposes a legal formula that provides fixed and continuous support in the form of a public foundation.
- It is created as a meeting place - as a platform - that allows initiatives at regional and municipal levels to converge and feed the search for innovation and quality through processes of systematisation, transfer, and upscaling.
- A system of open governance is foreseen that allows both public actors from different territorial levels and private actors, whether from the third social sector, philanthropy, or business, to have a voice.
- It is committed to mixed financing of the platform's activities.
- Planning and evaluation functions related to social innovation are promoted as an essential part of the institution's mission.
- It is conceived as an incremental process, based on experiences acquired in the framework of the pilot experiences in the deinstitutionalisation strategy.

The roadmap highlights the need for a continued commitment to innovation and reform in social services beyond the investment of funds. With that, it aligns with experiences in other European countries. It suggests that the professionalization of the sector is necessary to base interventions on evidence and promote continuous learning and modernization of professional profiles, intervention methods, and funding instruments. It notes that the social services sector requires a deep transformation to provide better responses to citizens' needs and become more efficient.

Finally, the roadmap stresses the importance of social innovation and planning in achieving universal coverage of social services and fulfilling the state's obligation to protect citizens' rights. It argues that innovation is a critical component of public policy and management, particularly in the field of social services.

In order to carry out the mission, the lines of action of the CERISS will be the following:

- LISTENING AND MAPPING: Identification and catalysation of actors, needs, challenges, emerging challenges and initiatives in the different ACs and at national level.
- EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION: To promote cooperation, meeting and exchange between experiences of social innovation, connecting them so that they contribute value by working in a network.
- TRAINING: To train and advise different actors and promote innovation approaches, tools and actions.
- ADVICE: To support the planning and evaluation of public social policies and those linked to social innovation.
- SCALING AND TRANSFER: Support scaling and transfer processes of initiatives that have shown results.
- FINANCING: Facilitate the financing of projects and design specific financial vehicles according to the typology and phases of the innovation.

The BuiCaSuS outcomes for Spain

https://buicasus.eu/topic/spain/

Sweden

The European Commission (EC) and other central societal actors in the EU and Sweden emphasize that social innovation is required to solve complex societal challenges such as unemployment, ill health, and segregation. The EC has prioritized social innovation through many initiatives, including the financing of national competence centres for social innovation in most member states.

Forum for Social Innovation is a national competence and collaboration platform for social innovation, based at the University of Malmö. FfSIS started its work in 2010, and was selected as the Competence Centre for Sweden, in cooperation with Reach for Change and Inkludera.

A first task for the Competence Centre was a mapping of the situation for the Swedish ecosystem for social innovation. This was done through summarizing previous, existing reports on the ecosystem, written by different organizations in the ecosystem. A brief description of the Swedish ecosystem is that there are, essentially, good preconditions for social innovation in Sweden, in the form of engaged actors and manifold initiatives. The Swedish Government's strategy (2018-2020) for social enterprise and social innovation has provided a sound foundation and helped bring actors together. In addition, there is widespread commitment in many sectors to achieving the global sustainability goals of the 2030 Agenda.

At the same time, there is now (after the lack of priority and funding for the strategy) a lack of clear political support and guidance for social innovation and social enterprise in Sweden. A consensus in the Swedish ecosystem for social innovation in Sweden, supported by several reports, is the lack of a comprehensive policy for social innovation and social enterprise in Sweden.

Also, access to more long-term and systematic financing is needed to establish and scale social innovations and ventures. More knowledge and research is also needed. Overall, there is a need for a clearer organization and support of the social innovation ecosystem. National, regional, and local platforms need to be established and supported.

At present, there is a need for specific ecosystems for social innovation and social enterprise. It is however also important, that even more actors and organisations need to adopt socially innovative methods to address complex societal challenges, renew the Swedish welfare system and achieve the global sustainability goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Social innovation was established as a separate program area in the Swedish ESF+ program with funding to projects for developing and testing innovative solutions to meet challenges and needs in employment, education, social inclusion, etc. To support their innovation processes, and to support the social innovation ecosystem, the Swedish ESF-council granted support to FfSIS for managing the continued work as a CCSI. Based on the call from the Swedish ESF-council and the approved application, the Swedish CCSI will focus its work on the following areas:

1. Support of projects funded in Program Area E (PAE) – social innovation.
2. Analysis and evaluation for scaling of innovations in PAE.
3. Support of the ESF council and other key actors in the implementation of the ESF+ program.

4. Support of the Ecosystem at large.

A problem identified in the application is the lack of systematic support for creating effective, lasting and value-creating social innovations in the implementation of ESF+. This can be said to be challenging for creating innovative solutions for labour market related societal challenges, broadly.

The overall solution to this challenge is to strengthen the establishment of a national competence centre for social innovation in Sweden. The mission of the Swedish competence centre is to develop a support function that furthers efficient, lasting and value-creating innovations in the implementation of the ESF+, and to strengthen the ecosystem for social innovation.

The competence centre will provide support to projects and managing authorities in terms of gearing up, owning and operating ESF projects within PAE, aggregating, analysing and disseminating results and good examples, as well as promoting the ecosystem for social innovations. It will also work to lay the foundation for a long-term establishment of the competence centre through an elaborate and proven collaboration structure.

In relation to the insufficient policy support for social innovation in Sweden, it will be relevant for the Swedish CCSI to identify and connect to different policy areas and goals. Policies to relate to will be goals and policies of relevance for ESF+, such as innovation policy, labour market policy, social policy, and education policy.

Through cross sectoral cooperation in an advisory board (aiming to establish a long-term structure for support of innovative solutions to labour market challenges), a reference group (providing input to identifying, solving and scaling innovative solutions to labour market challenges) as well as a scientific reference group, the competence centre will open up for dialogue, participation and target group involvement in the coming work.

The BuiCaSuS outcomes for Sweden

https://buicasus.eu/topic/sweden

4 Next steps and Outlook

In the discussion with consortium members and beyond with social innovation actors in our countries as well as the wider European social innovation community, several suggestions arose for future steps at national and European level.

What the European Commission could do

Mandate. It is important to render political support from the EC to the SI actors, both public and private. In that respect, is it important to anchor social innovation in future policy development and sustain the relevance as a self-standing pillar on equal footing with technological innovation. Also, the European Commission should facilitate information flow, peer review, and alignment for the Managing Authorities of the European Social Fund Plus, for example by commissioning a study on how article 14 had been responded to the in Operational Programmes in the 27 member states would contribute to a comparative stocktaking on the opportunities to come.

Model. The European Commission should continue to provide a learning platform for experience exchange, bringing together academics, policy makers, planners, and activists. In that respect, the Commission should strive to move beyond the "Brussels bubble" and interconnect small scale actors amongst European regions. Likewise, an Expert group could be set up, that would advance the common knowledge base, give more high-level visibility to the practice, and generate a common European epistemic space on social innovation practice.

Money. Beyond the article 14 programming at member state level, smart funding tools could be deployed in various directorates, including EASI, HORIZON and others. It seems particularly relevant to overcome the silo-approach to funding and devising financing vehicles for cross-fund projects in social innovation, that would combine FSE, Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Common agricultural policy funds or the Just Transition Mechanism, could ensure genuine intersectoral approaches.

What EU member states could do

Strategy. In most of the member states, no national policy on social innovation exists. Being explicit on policy objectives and support tools can generate critical mass and align actors towards new approaches. A Social Innovation strategy,

whether national or regional, can support member states to transition from the current model to a more entrepreneurial and experimental one that can define collaborative missions and incorporate a portfolio approach instead of single point solutions.

Structure. Whether managed directly by the public administration or indirectly by delegation to third sector operators, the setting up of a CCSI seem a necessary step to reinforce the capacities of the state to support social innovation practice and direct funds to where they are most effective. Networking, advise in generation and upscaling and a continuous mapping of the SI action on the ground would be amongst the tasks of such centre.

Synergies. While there are several design options for CCSI governance structures, the involvement of different logics – including government, civil society, private enterprise, and community actors – needs to be enacted. This necessity to bridge distinctive organizational logics needs the support to waive restricting legal provisions in largescale real-life sandbox experimentation.

What civil society actors could do

Alliance. Engage in networking at EU level, while being explicit about the roles of rights advocate, innovators or service provider, and its respective implications.

Alteration. Do new things, accelerate cross-sector collaboration, and regain the role of innovators. By experimenting with new ideas and taking risks, organizations can push the boundaries of what is possible and create more effective solutions.

Alignment. Aspire to engage with the state by engaging in democratically defined missions. Civil society organizations can develop new modes of collaboration with government and other stakeholders to align their efforts around common goals and strategies. By working together, organizations can create more impactful solutions and achieve greater social change.

"BuiCaSuS is a transnational project aimed to strengthen the capacities of national competence centres for social innovation. Partners come from Spain, Sweden, Latvia, and France. It is one of six consortia funded by the European Commission. Amongst its tasks is to map current social innovation systems, support piloting and upscaling schemes, foster transnational learning on tools for innovation, and develop policy propositions for National competence centres."