

Policy recommendations on deploying measures supporting social innovation



Zoritz Kiresiewa, Ecologic Institute, 21 October 2025



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Policy & Funding Frameworks for Social Innovation



EU policy framework

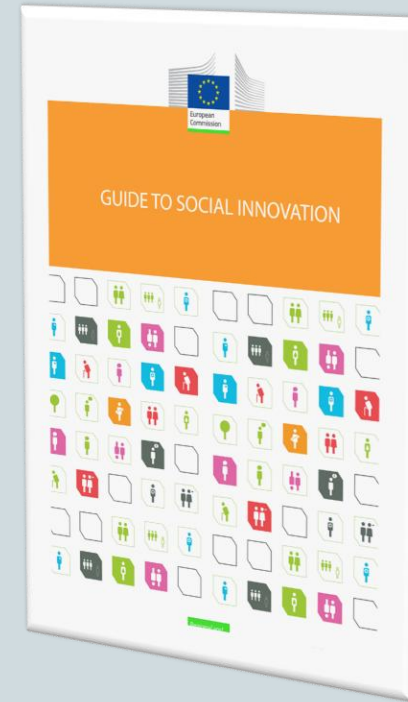
- European Green Deal
- EU Bioeconomy Strategy

National strategies (examples):

- Germany: National Strategy for Social Innovation & Social Enterprises (2023)
- The Netherlands: Circular Economy Programme (2021–2030)
- Finland: Social Enterprises Strategy + Circular Economy Strategy

Funding & support programmes

- Horizon Europe (European Innovation Ecosystems)
- European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)
- LEADER



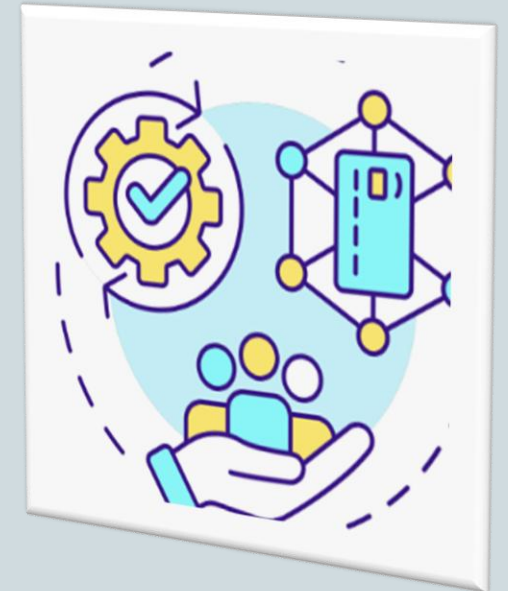
What are the challenges?



Financial challenges

Regulatory challenges

Collaboration & networking barriers



Key Policy Recommendations 1/3

Funding & Regulatory Support

- More accessible EU Funding and simplified application processes; tailor grants to SI themes (e.g. loneliness, sustainability)
- Empower regional development agencies: financial and personnel resources, capacity-building & training
- Introduce tax incentives for SI and sustainable practices
- Encourage private sector engagement in social financing and promote mechanisms like Social Impact Bonds
- Support certification costs and offer guidance programs



Key Policy Recommendations 2/3

Structural & Strategic Measures

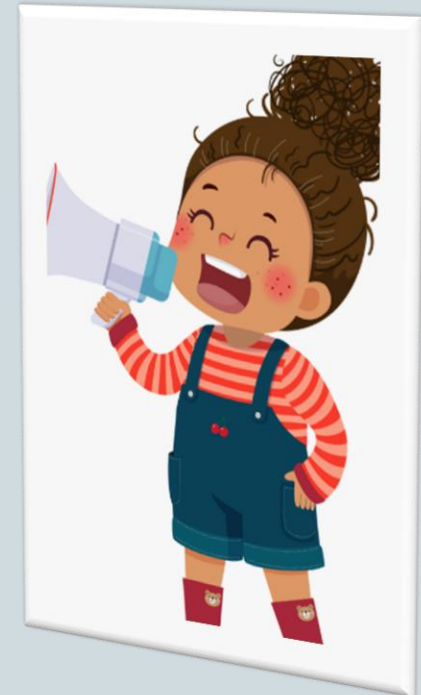
- Prioritize public procurement favoring social enterprises, e.g. formulation of legal requirements for fair and sustainable public procurement
- Improve regulatory standards, e.g. regarding greenwashing and value chain transparency (e.g. Green Claims Directive)
- Reduce regulatory burdens: streamline administrative and reporting tasks
- Ensure policy stability: long-term funding disconnected from political shifts
- Develop impact-oriented funding criteria and monitoring frameworks



Key Policy Recommendations 3/3

Strengthening Collaboration & Public Awareness

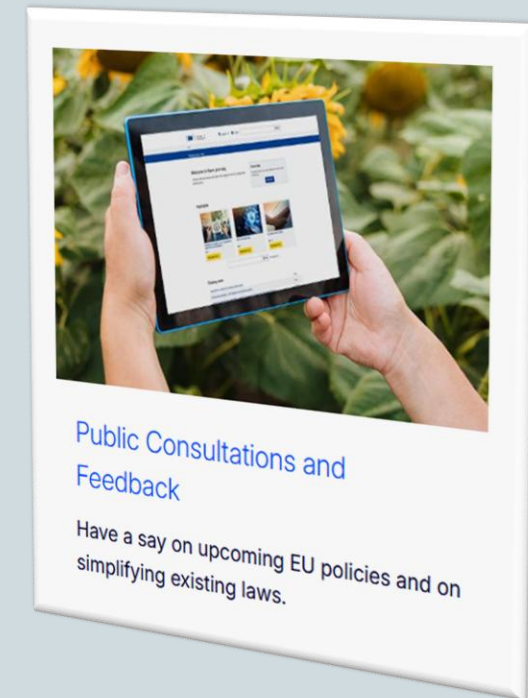
- Launch awareness campaigns to reshape public perception; e.g. informational events to increase understanding of social innovation
- Facilitate networking and collaboration among social-sector representatives; support multi-stakeholder collaboration: NGOs, government, private sector



Windows of opportunity within EU policy development



- Strategic Plan for the upcoming Research and Innovation Framework Programme (FP10)
- European Semester – Country-Specific Recommendations
- Implementation of the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive
- EU Bioeconomy Strategy – Review and Update



EU Bioeconomy Strategy Review (2025)

- **Pillar II: Increasing resource-efficient and circular use of biological resources**
- Example: Community-led cooperatives that promote circular use of biological resources and resource-efficient practices
- **Pillar III: Securing an affordable and sustainable supply of biomass**
- Example: Support for primary producers networks adopting sustainable harvesting and creating local value chains using local resources.

* Examples of social innovation such as community-led projects, community gardening, social cooperatives can be found here: <https://3co-project.eu/social-innovation-factsheets/>



Thank you

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Source for the icons: Canva database, <https://www.canva.com/>