



S.S.E. Strategic Plan Greece 2022

A request from Greek Social Enterprises

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"S.S.E. Strategic Plan: A request from Greek Social Enterprises" is an initiative to formulate a coherent and holistic Strategic Plan for the Social Economy in Greece. Its main purpose is to develop a comprehensive action plan aiming at the development of the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) sector in Greece. For the needs of this project, we relied on an innovative approach of collecting data "from below". Thus, Greek S.S.E. organisations participate and collaborate in such an initiative as authors for the first time. Upon research completion, valuable data of high reliability was at our disposal, which helped us develop a set of intervention pillars and proposed actions. We strongly believe that our initiative will contribute to the formation of realistic proposals and visioning, in the process of planning S.S.E. strategies and policies, for the development and sustainability of the sector.

This project runs in parallel with a series of similar initiatives in Europe that have taken place since the beginning of 2020 following a relevant EU number of actions. All European actions stated above aim at the preparation and formation of the *European Action Plan for the Social Economy*. The aforementioned EU mobilization was decided on 1 December 2019 at the urging and direction of European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen to EU Commissioner for Employment and Social Rights Nicolas Schmit. Since then, various conferences, meetings and other relevant actions took place and are still running in many European cities, while the final project proposal has been announced at the end of 2021. New planned events and discussions continue with the aim of codification, completion and gradual implementation.

For our research specific needs, we looked for Greek S.S.E. organisations of all types using the random sampling method. The sample derived from the list of all entities registered in the official S.S.E. registry of the Ministry of Labour. One hundred and twelve (112) S.S.E. bodies responded to our call for contributions, while thirty-four (34) entities answered a questionnaire of twenty-five (25) open-ended questions related to the issues concerning the operation of the sector and its capacity for further development. The remaining organizations (78) participated as observers and attended the online or live meetings and presentations of the project at all stages. The interaction with the aforementioned S.S.E. organisations gave us the opportunity to record perceptions, attitudes and opinions about the current situation in the field of S.S.E. in Greece and helped us gather valuable feedback that contributed to the formulation of proposals for the development of the whole sector.

Our research paper begins with a brief review regarding historical data and the analysis of the economic situation that contributed and justified the need for the emergence and consolidation of the Social Economy and its institutions in Europe. We also refer to the social impact of such organisations in the EU Member States and their contribution in employment as recorded in recent years. The evolution of the S.S.E. sector in Greece (K.A.L.O. in Greek) from 2000 until today is reviewed as well. To ensure objective documentation, latest statistical data on the activities of S.S.E. entities in the country were obtained from

the report published by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs under the general title "SSE Report" years 2019-2020". Our analysis provides certain concrete examples of many legislative provisions that were never applied as well as numerous other provisions of the most recent Law 4430/2016, which were not implemented with the required adequacy.

In the empirical study that follows, negligences and omissions in the implementation of the institutional framework are identified and demonstrated. The S.S.E. entities participated describe how deficiencies in the implementation of the legislative provisions intensify the difficulties faced by the S.S.E. sector bodies to achieve their goals and in particular, work integration and sustainable operation. Views and suggestions on how to solve problems that hinder the development or make their viability difficult were recorded. The views and comments contributed by the bodies lead to the writing down of a sustainable action plan useful for the planning of a precise implementation in order actions to be taken to restructure and expand S.S.E. sector.

In our conclusions, we describe eight (8) central pillars of intervention for designing, developing and categorise policies into actions. They focus on the efficient diffusion of purposes and usefulness of the S.S.E., the modification of the legislative framework, the application of social impact measurement practices and the design and implementation of an educational framework for the preparation of S.S.E. The actors of the S.S.E. bodies expect and demand the implementation of the provision announced in Law 4430/2016 for the establishment of a financial support body (Social Economy Fund). It is clear though that the financial viability of institutions is a cornerstone for their social goals success. It is necessary, however, the above-mentioned financial support to be combined with the technical support of specialized S.S.E. support centers. It is actually clear that the all proposed intervention and action plan central pillars composed must comprise policies for employment adapted to the operational and economic specificities of the Greek S.S.E. Moreover, they must take into account the unique social characteristics of their members, most of whom belong to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.