

Social
Innovation 
Initiative

Social Innovation Forum

26-27 October 2023, Brussels



Funded by
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Opening and Welcome

Ruth Paserman

Director for Funds, Programming and Implementation,
DG EMPL, European Commission

Neringa Poškutė

Head of Social Innovations and Transnational Initiatives Division,
European Social Fund Agency

What Would It Take to Tackle Today's Societal Challenges?


Louis Vervloet

Former Head of the ESF Managing Authority Flanders



What Would It Take to Tackle Today's Societal Challenges?


Social Innovation and Experimentation:
Challenges, Opportunities, and Competencies
Flemish experiences





Purpose of this presentation

Sharing my views and practices on social innovation and experimentation

- 
- 1.Challenges
 - 2.Opportunities
 - 3.Pitfalls
 - 4.Competences
 - 5.Partnerships
 - 6.Experiences in Flanders
 - 7.Conclusion



The challenges

- . Lack of funding
- . Resistance to change
- . Scaling up
- . Measuring impact
- . Replication

The opportunities



- Solving complex social challenges
- Creating new jobs and economic opportunities
- Improving public policy
- Building social capital
- Inspiring others

The pitfalls



- . Focusing on the wrong problem
- . Not involving the right stakeholders
- . Not measuring impact
- . Not being patient
- . Not being prepared to fail

The competencies needed



- . Problem-solving skills
- . Collaboration skills
- . Communication skills
- . Resilience
- . Adaptability

Partnerships

Local partnerships enable us to

- ❖ Better understand the needs of communities, build trust,
- ❖ Foster collaboration,
- ❖ Share knowledge, resources, expertise, networks, etc.,

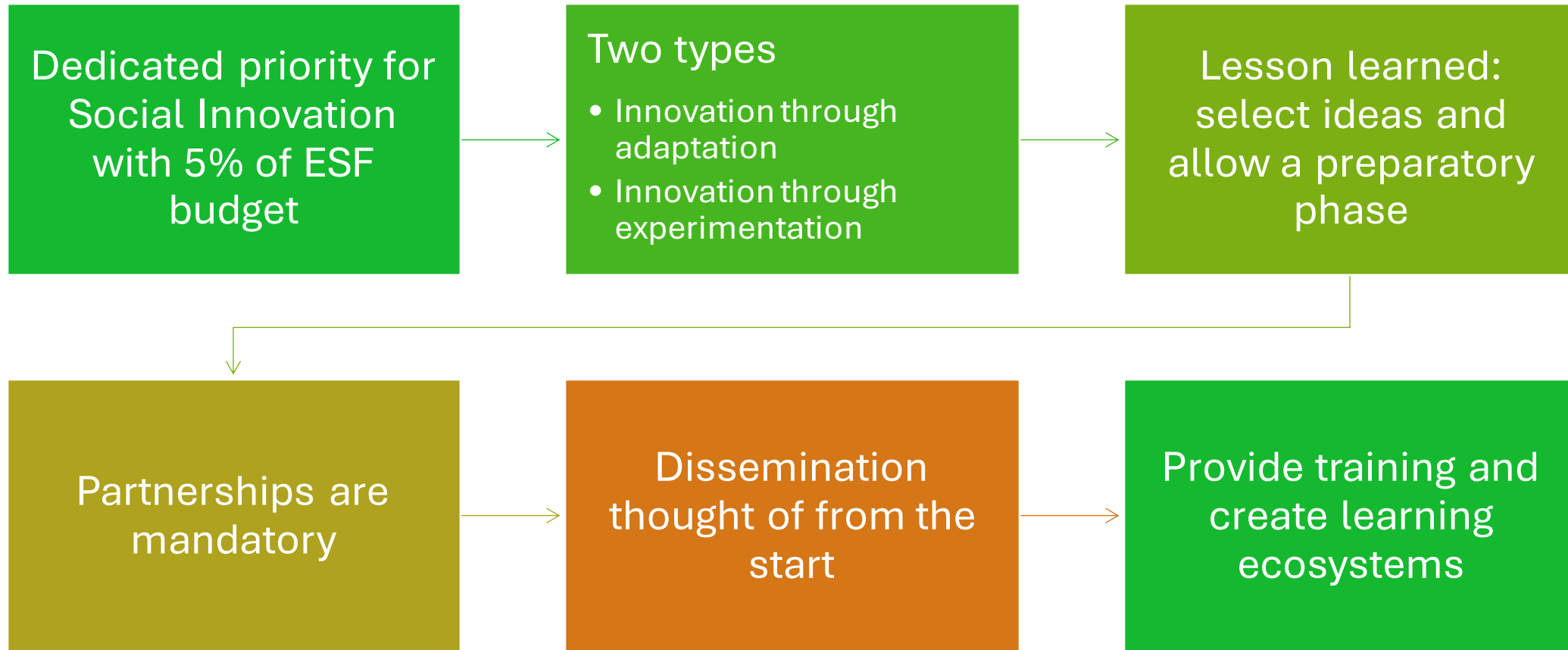
critical for creating sustainable solutions that meet local needs

Transnational partnerships enable us to

- ❖ Leverage diverse perspectives,
- ❖ Learn from Europe
- ❖ Expertise, resources, networks, etc.,

from different countries or regions that can help us develop more effective solutions.

Financing: the Flemish experience



Financing: the Flemish experience

Realizing impact:

- set up a system of validation
- positive validation leads to extra money and time
- not positive = product no longer financeable in ESF mainstream
- Ambassadors

Currently stimulation through:

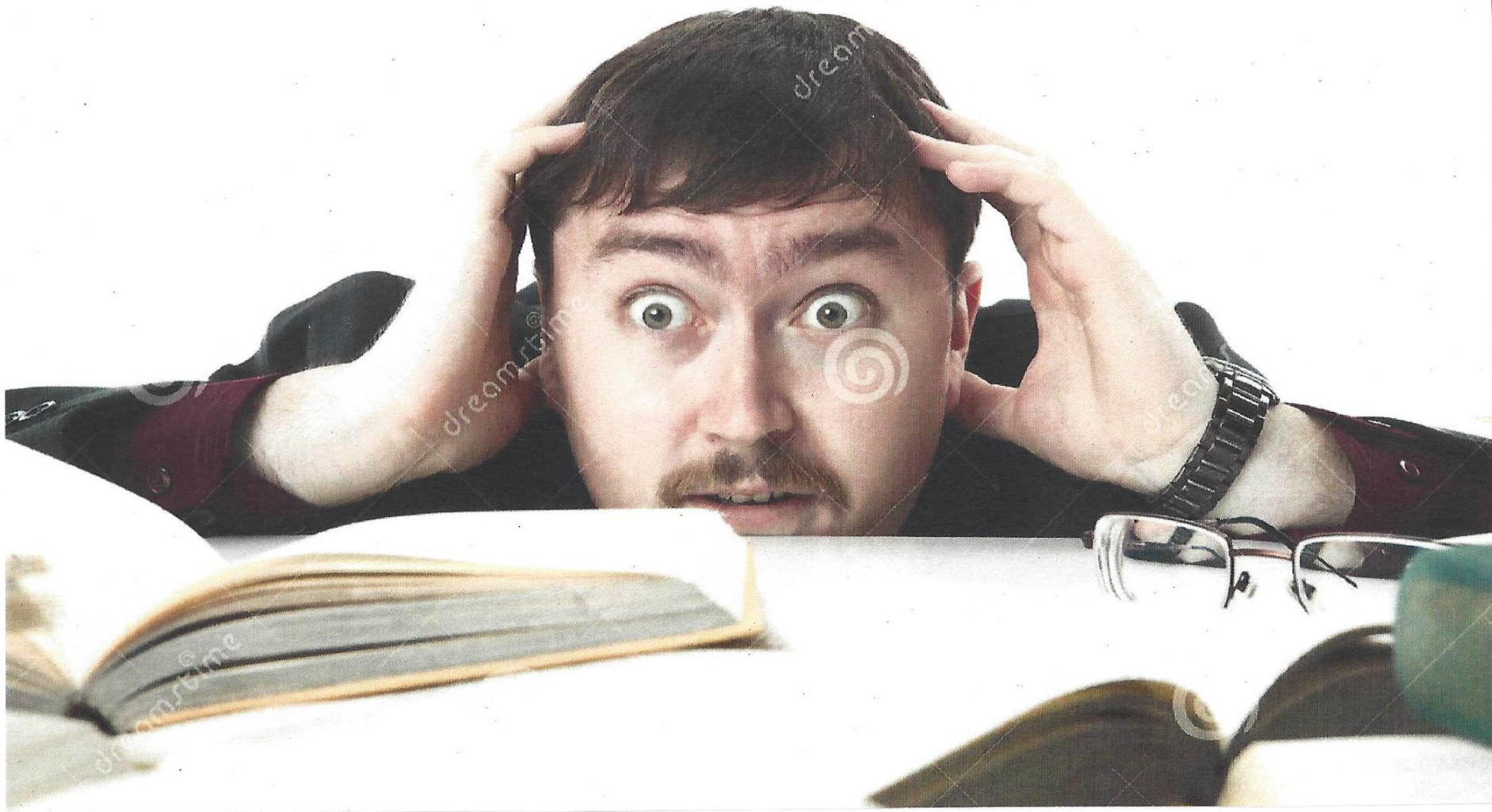
- creation of hubs
- creation of local and thematical partnerships



Conclusion

- Social innovation and experimentation are critical for finding new solutions to complex societal problems.
- They allow us to test new ideas before investing significant resources in them.
- However, there are many challenges associated with these approaches, but at the same time it offers a lot of potential.
- To be successful in this field, it's important to have certain competencies.
- We have to learn to make an opportunity out of every problem.
- Need for clear definition of problems - extensive stakeholder analysis.
- All partners need a clear role and well-defined responsibility.

? ? ? ?



Questions???

- Some will get an immediate and straight answer
- Some will be more difficult and take time and or consultation
- Some will be answered by “riding around the block”
- Some will require to look beyond the horizon
- Some will not get an answer

BUT

You must always ask them



The most important
thing in music ...
are not the notes

Gustave Mahler



Thank you for your attention

Louis Vervloet

Former ESF Managing Authority Flanders

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**Social
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Panel Discussion: Synergies and Cross-Cutting Topics



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the European Union

Moderator

Wim De Vilder

Participants:

Michael Grosse, team leader – Social Innovation, DG EMPL, European Commission

Vera Egreja Barracho, thematic expert, CoP on Social Innovation

Luk Zelderloo, lead thematic expert, CoP on Social Inclusion

Rimgailė Baltutė, lead thematic expert, CoP on Material Support

Jörg Markowitsch, thematic expert, CoP on Employment, Education and Skills

Nadia Sacoor, thematic expert, CoP on Migrant Integration

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Delivering on the Promises of Social Innovation

Miquel de Paladella

CEO, UpSocial

Delivering on the promises of social innovation

Miquel de Paladella
Brussels, October 27, 2023



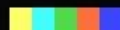
Up  Social Innovation and Scaling

Social Innovation  Initiative

Why social innovation

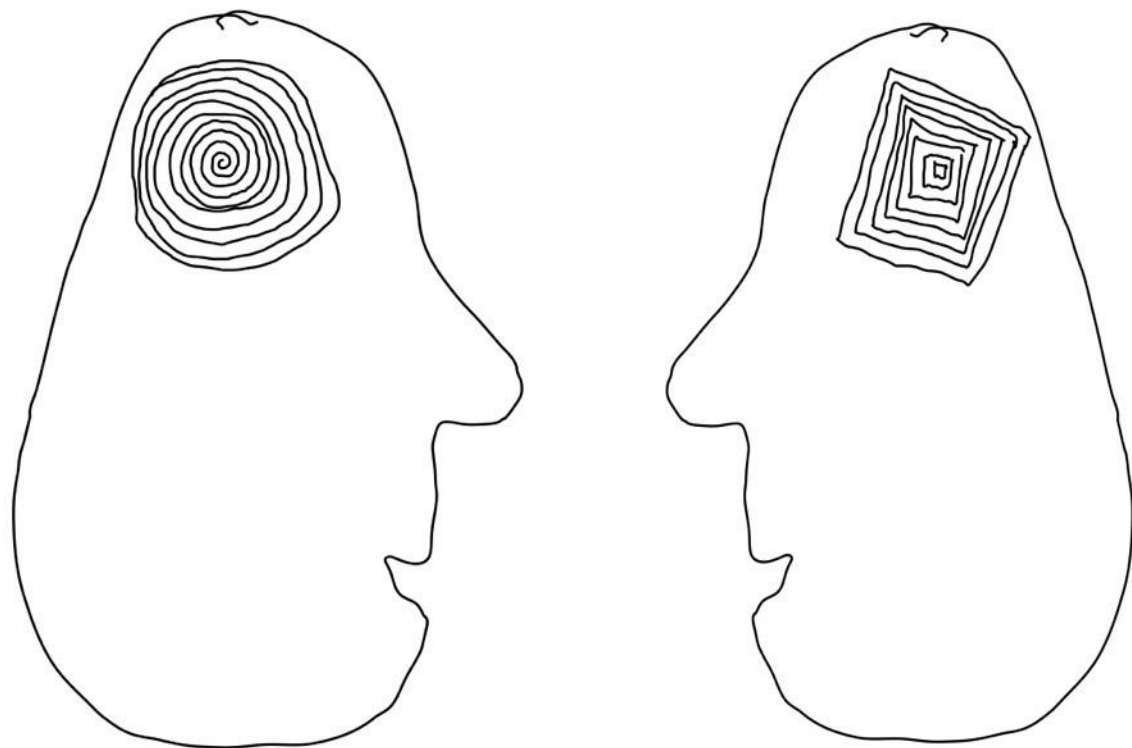


Wicked problems
Complex, multifaceted, and often deeply entrenched in societal structures.



Difficulties to invest in **prevention**

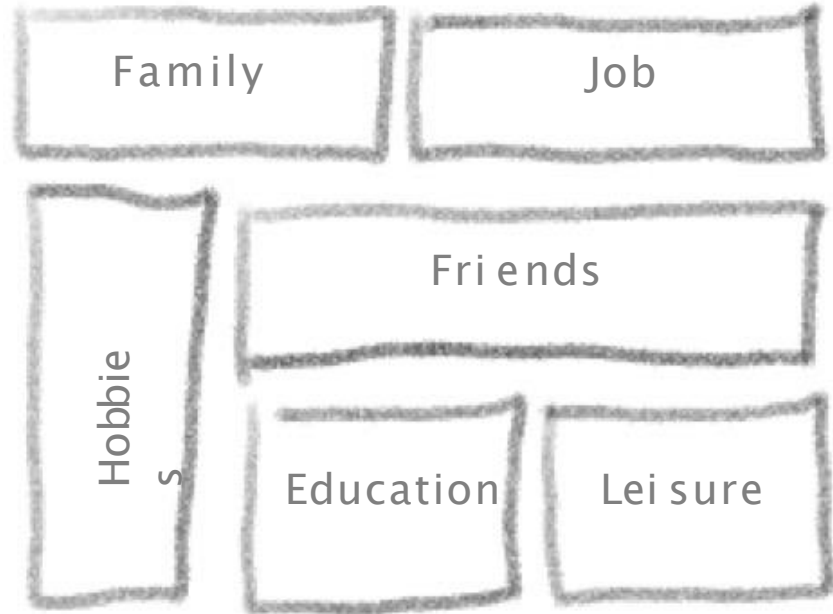




**Ideology gets on the way,
obstructing experimentation**



**Problems grow faster
than existing responses**



Compartmentalised solutions to interconnected problems

*blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah
blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah
blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah
blah blah blah blah blah blah blah blah
h blah blah blah
blah blah blah
ah blah*





When is social innovation delivering on its promise?

7 lessons learnt

1. When it is driven by **demand**.



Not supply-driven

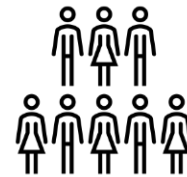
2. When the **challenge** is well-designed.



Data intensive



Useful frame



Beneficiaries get
engaged

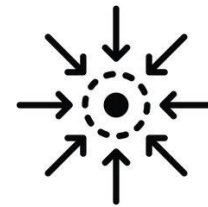


Depth

3. When it finds the most **effective moment** of intervention.



Understanding the itineraries of the problem



When would it have highest impact

4. When the experiments is driven by its **legacy**



Pilot generates
knowledge...

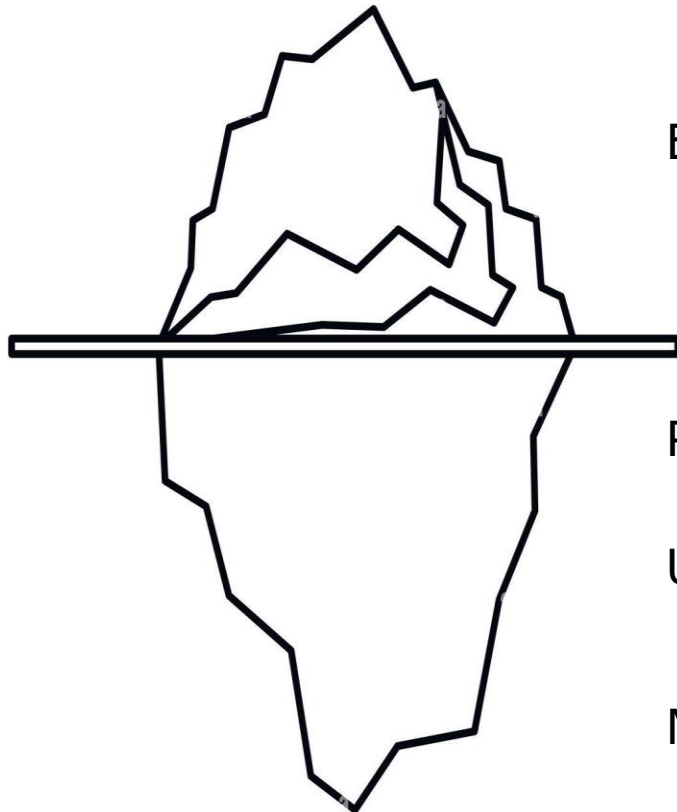


based on
evidence



...that would be used to
scale up the response.

5. When it addresses **systemic** causes



Events... **React**

Patterns... **Anticipate**

Underlying structures... **Design / Reform**

Mental models... **Transform**

6. When **slowness** is acknowledged.



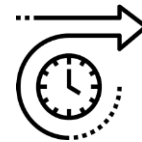
Hold the urgency



Build ecosystem



Share agency



Timeframes to
measure what matters

7. When **scalability** is designed from the start.



Active ingredients



Simplifying is an
enabler of scale



Demand is the best
energy source

7. When **scalability** is designed from the start.



Active ingredients



Simplifying is an
enabler of scale



Demand is the best
energy source

Why social innovation?

- **To address wicked problems.**
- **investing in prevention**
- **creating evidenced-based interventions.**
- **capable of becoming scalable solutions**
- **addressing all its components as part of a whole system.**

When SI works?

Driven by demand

The problem is deeply understood

Finds best moment of intervention

Legacy as the main focus

Addresses systemic causes

Slowly

Scalability design in experiment.

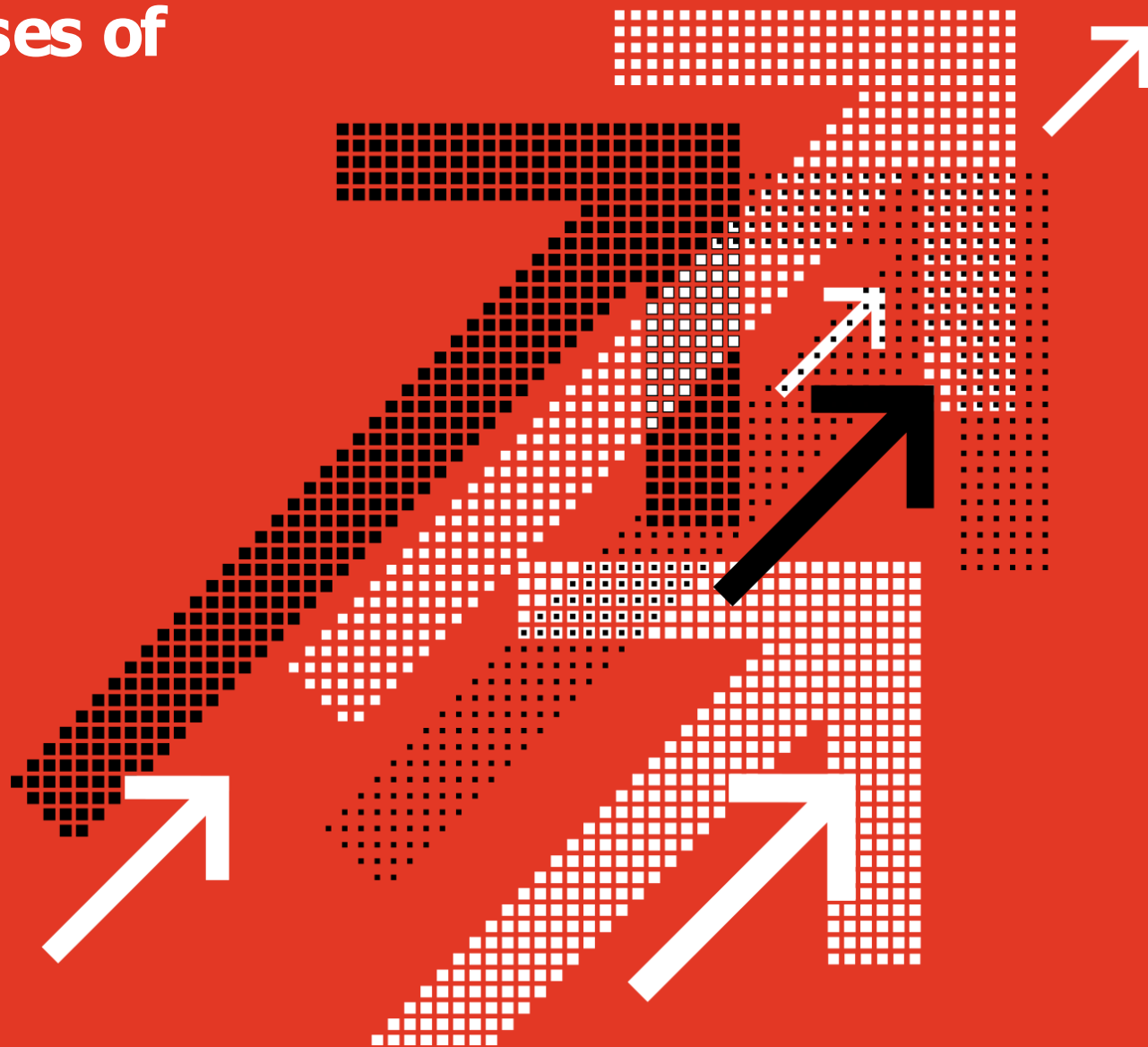
It is a great moment to innovate!

**Delivering on the promises of
social innovation.**

Thanks!

Miquel de Paladella

Up↑Social Innovation
and Scaling



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**Social
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Panel Discussion: Social Innovation in Different CoPs Thematic Areas



Funded by
the European Union

Moderator

Wim De Vilder

Participants:

Armelle Ledan, lead thematic expert, CoP on Social Innovation

Luk Zelderloo, lead thematic expert, CoP on Social Inclusion

Angela Frigo, thematic expert, CoP on Material Support

Agota Scharle, lead thematic expert, CoP on Employment, Education and Skills

Erika Borg, thematic expert, CoP on Migrant Integration

Miquel de Paladella, CEO, UpSocial

**Social
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The European Competence Centre for Social Innovation: Progress and Future Plans

Asta Jurgutė

European Competence Centre for Social Innovation



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EU-Level calls for proposals



Progress

ALMA (December 2022, 15 MEUR)

National Competence Centres for Social Innovation: Building-up and Consolidating the Capacity (August 2023, 8 MEUR)



Upcoming

Social Innovations for the **Upskilling of Vulnerable Youth** (NEETs)
(November 2023, 9 MEUR)

Mitigating the societal consequences of the war in Ukraine in the EU
(December 2023, 22 MEUR)

Key areas



Social Innovation Knowledge Centre



Progress

5 Communities of Practice (CoPs)

2 Networks

500 unique members from across EU

31 events performed



Upcoming

9 more events by the end of 2023

54 events for 2024:

34 events of the CoPs & Networks

20 events to support beneficiaries of EU level calls for proposals

Upcoming CoPs & Networks events

CoP on Social Innovation

Connect SIM case studies (successful SI) with potential needs and opportunities in ESF+ programmes (November, online)

CoP on Employment, Education, Skills

Study visit on how to target vulnerable youths (27-28 November, Helsinki)

Working sessions of 3 CoPs

About the work programmes 2024 (December, online)

CoP on Material Support

Bridging Communities in Times of Crisis: Providing Material Support for Vulnerable Groups (21-22 November, Warsaw)

ALMA Network

ALMA network meeting (9 November, online)
ALMA network meeting (5-6 December, Milan)

EURoma network

EU Roma network meeting (1 December, Madrid)

CoPs outputs being produced



Progress

Desk review of the **priorities dedicated to Social Innovation** in ESF+ national and regional programmes.

Review **to map emerging patterns and common elements** of the key outputs produced by NCC 2020 Call addressing **four strategic areas**.

Mapping and Exploration reports on the subthemes **on Child Poverty, Homelessness, Community Living and Empowering Social Services**.



Upcoming

Independent **Living toolkit**.

Mapping report **Managing labour market transitions** through developing employment services.

Mapping report **Improving the resilience of education and training systems**.

Mapping report **Targeting ESF+ support to vulnerable youth**.

Mapping report of **innovative ways to tackle long-term unemployment**.

Mapping report **Exploring ESF+ practices for addressing Material deprivation** across MS.

Others

Analysis, monitoring, policy development of SI activities, ecosystems and supporting policies



Progress

Approach for collaboration between Competence Centres for Social Innovation (common areas of work)

Working group of Competence Centres for Social Innovation:

- Kick-off meeting (21 June, Portugal)
- Working group meeting (25 October, Brussels)



Upcoming

European Social innovation ecosystem mapping and operational model(s) framework

Report on the **state and development of social innovation ecosystems** in Europe

Learning group for the methodology, common indicators

Continuous monitoring with the help of National Competence Centres for Social Innovation

Open Call for Experts



External experts to support ESFA throughout the implementation of the ESF+ SI+ initiative



Open call (in continuous) during the ESF+ SI+ initiative period



Expertise and professional experience for the policy areas set out in article 4 of the ESF+ Regulation

Open call for expression of interest 2022-2027:
www.esf.lt
commission.europa.eu/index_en

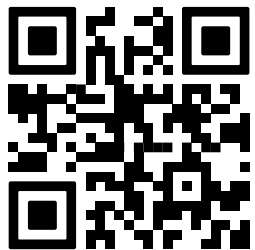
340
potential experts registered

Social Innovation Match



The SIM database aims **to promote the transfer and/or scaling-up** of social innovation across Europe.

SIM provides an opportunity **to showcase** social innovation examples and can be used as **a search engine** for social innovation stakeholders.



152 Social Innovation practices uploaded

Useful links



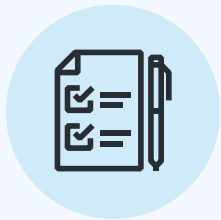
Contacts

cop@esf.it
events@esf.it
SIM@esf.it



Websites

www.esf.it/en
ec.europa.eu/european-social-fund-plus/en



Expression of interest form to join the CoPs

www.surveymonkey.com/r/KCHJXT6



Expert registration form

www.esf.it/en/call-for-external-experts-who-would-be-interested-in-assisting-esfa-in-implementing-the-esf-social-innovation-initiative/1081

Closing remarks

Ruth Paserman

Director for Funds, Programming and Implementation,
DG EMPL, European Commission