

Social Innovation Plus – Competence Centres (SI Plus)

2nd Meeting of the Steering Committee

Vienna, 15-16 September 2021, hybrid meeting

Draft Minutes

1st day – 15 September 2021

Welcome & introduction

Barbara Willsberger (LP, AT, L&R Social Research) welcomed the participants and provided an overview of the developments since the start of the project. She expressed her gratitude to the partners. The project partners reiterated their agreement on a common definition of social innovation (SI) based on the ESF+ regulation, the next step is going to be to set up criteria for the operationalisation of social innovation (SI). An online survey was conducted in Austria, the results of which are going to be the basis for the criteria set, as well as the operationalisation.

Tour de table

SK (ESF MA): The survey proposed by the LP was translated and sent to 300 potential respondents, 40 responses were received so far. The situation was mapped in the SI ecosystem, including both state institutions and social enterprises. There are delays and challenges related to public procurement and similar initiatives.

HU (IFKA): HU is currently conducting desk research. Some delays occurred due to procurement guidelines in HU. A stakeholder meeting on the 28th of July was held regarding the mapping. Ministries, universities, business and social innovation development organizations participated in the meeting.

During the preparatory phase of mapping it turned out that there are two managing authorities in Hungary being responsible for ESF Plus funded operative programs:

- Ministry of Innovation and Technology (issued the endorsement letter to IFKA)
- Ministry of Human Resources

Synergies are sought with a parallel social innovation project called “TinLab” (National Social Innovation Laboratory) run by 3 universities (Eötvös Lóránt University of Sciences – Budapest, University of Miskolc, Pannon university – Veszprém). The TinLab project focuses on the mapping of SI and makes use of the quadruple helix approach in the following 8 thematic clusters:

- Digitization
- Cultural innovation and creative industries
- Local developments, governance

- environment and climate
- Social welfare
- Human systems (social and educational systems, health care)
- Future of work, future economy
- Social innovation management

Within SI PLUS, HU is going to focus on niches in order to complement this existing initiative. Next meeting with TinLab is planned to be held in September, and the next stakeholder meeting with the ministries being responsible for ESF Plus programs in Hungary is planned to be organized in early October.

BG (SDA): The research is divided into three steps: desk research, focus groups and interviews. BG would be happy to receive feedback about the methodology it has applied from the project partners. The methodology was shared with the consortium partners and the BG MA, to plan further steps. An initial meeting was held with the MA. The next BG consortium meeting will be held in October. SDA is in a constant exchange with another consortium, where BG participates. So far, the desk research has shown a rather "fuzzy" character of SI. Participants stated that they share common challenges and opportunities, as well as their approaches.

Preliminary results of the survey – discussion

LP presented the preliminary results of the survey, see annex 2. Participants discussed the Austrian approach, as well as its outcomes and the general meaning of SI to an existing administrative system. See annexes 2 and 3.

Next steps operationalisation:

- Know-how exchange with other consortia during CoP Meeting (7 Oct)
- SI Plus will send their comments on the draft paper "operationalisation" till 14th of October
- LP will summarize the comments and send the updated version to the partners till 19th of October

Presentation of the PEnCIL project

Caroline Meyers (ESF MA Flanders) presented the PEnCIL project from the same call. See annex 4.

Preliminary discussion of the 3 Thematic networks to be built

Participants addressed the 3 thematic networks that are to be built according to the project outline. While some thematic networks could focus on specific policies, others may address administrative aspects of ESF+ implementation.

2nd day, 16 September 2021

Update from the EC

Maria-Anna Paraskeva (DG EMPL) referred to the Speech of the Union by the EC's president and the programme that was newly established called ALMA, which is going to upscale a German social innovation project. The programme is going to complement Erasmus and the solidarity corps.

EC has launched a call (200 Mio € for expression of interest for a Managing Authority to conduct transnational activities in the ESF+ framework, including cooperation with the National Centres for Social Innovation).¹ She underlined the importance of transnational cooperation within the framework of SI. It should be borne in mind that the incentive for the EU MS to participate in SI seems to work, with more and more MS proposing to have a Priority Axis on SI. Paraskeva highlighted the importance of learning from failures in the field of SI. Moreover, she stated that the Commission's database on SI is soon going to be online.

First steps towards building the National Competence Centres for Social Innovation – discussion

Project partners discussed their programmes and approaches towards establishing the National Centres. There is an ongoing exchange with another consortium where BG organizations are involved. The mapping will be conducted in close cooperation with the MA. There will be a number of discussions with stakeholders, part of the ecosystem. SDA is partner in an application for future contact point of the EaSI programme in BG.

HU stressed that based on the results of the 1st stakeholder meeting with ministries, universities and SI development organizations (28.7.2021) there is still uncertainty regarding political commitment from the side of the respective public authorities. MAs are going to be informed about the activities. Uncertainty arises from the political situation (upcoming elections). In HU, there will not be a priority axis on social innovation in the ESF PLUS². However, the EDIOP (Economic Development Operative Program) PLUS will focus on economic development through priorities like business development or sustainable labour market, with social aspects and impacts of SMEs being crucial.

As for setting up the competence centre in Hungary, IFKA will approach TinLab in September in order to draft the frameworks of the cooperation and exploitation of synergies between the two SI development projects like coordination of mapping or setting up regional branches of the competence centre with the involvement of the partner universities of the TinLab project.

SK organised a meeting where several Ministries, NGOs and universities were invited. SK hired two experts and one analyst to establish the National Centres. An exchange is also going on with CZ. A web platform is going to be established, which is a long-term process and is going to be separated from the ministry's website.

¹ See <https://ec.europa.eu/european-social-fund-plus/system/files/2021-07/Call%20for%20expression%20of%20interest%20final%202023%2007.pdf>

² The situation had changed since the meeting. There will be 1 priority axis directly dedicated for social innovation: HRDOP (Human Resources Development Operative Program) PLUS; 7th priority; Catching-up Communities Program

AT will have its kick-off event on 9 November 2021. Pilot projects will be developed throughout the project. Integration of disadvantaged people on the labour market will be one of the major foci. A working group on SI was established by the Ministry of Labour. For the upscaling, two pilot regions were chosen, which are also the ones selected for the JTF. Contacts were also established with ERDF and LEADER initiatives. In the ESF+, there will be a connection with LEADER.

Development of the transnational online platform of the consortium

IFKA presented the transnational online platform/website, see annex 5. For the internal change of documents, the consortium agreed on using Microsoft Teams as a joint platform.

Public relations (logo, templates, common approach) – the case of Austria

The consortium discussed the Austrian proposal for a joint project logo. More versions will be elaborated and the consortium is going to agree upon a final version to be used by all the project partners. See bit.ly/siplus.

Preliminary discussion of the twinning projects action plans – sharing ideas

The consortium exchanged preliminary ideas on how to design the twinning project action plans. The action plan should be ready during October 2021 and the twinning activities would run until the end of 2022. One topic could be how to implement SI in the ESF OPs. Another approach could be to use the twinning approach for the scaling-up of projects which is also foreseen in the project. Further consultation with MAs is needed. The staff exchange could be useful in this context. SK brought up the idea to focus on the quality of the employment services and the involvement of non-public service providers, as well as e.g. social enterprises. There should be the right mix between the approaches of the MAs and the respective stakeholders.

There will be bilateral meetings between HU und BG as well SK and AT till the end of October to discuss and define the common action plan. Considering the upcoming report in April, there might be some leeway to reach this deliverable.

NEXT STEPs and TO Dos

To Do		When?
Operationalisation of SI		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the inputs during the CoP- Meeting the draft will be adapted • Comments from all partners • Final Draft to all partners 	L&R All L&R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 Oct. • 18 Oct • 22 Oct
Mapping of the SI eco-system	All	Nov/Dec 21
Twinning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First bilateral Meeting AT-SK • First bilateral Meeting BG-HU • Action Plan for Twinning 	AT-SK BG-HU	October 2021 November 2021
PR/Communication		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further suggestions for the Logo • Feedback by all partners • Finalisation of Logo • Adaption of templates • Joint Platform/Microsoft Teams 	arbeit plus all arbeit plus IFKA IFKA	4 October 14 October 22 October 29 October asap

Annexes

1. Agenda of the meeting
2. Presentation of the preliminary survey results in Austria
3. Mapping in Austria
4. Presentation PEnCIL project
5. IFKA presentation online platform
6. Attendance list