

# Interreg



EUROPEAN UNION

## Alpine Space



EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

# SOCIAL INNOVATION SCHOOL BOOK



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# SUMMARY

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**Social Innovation Academy** will take place in February and March 2021 in 5 Alpine countries (Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia). This ebook is designed to help you, attending this Academy, to follow the training, gathering all needed resources at a single place and giving you tips and links to explore further.

All resources have been developed during the **ASIS (Alpine Space Innovation Strategy)** program, funded and coordinated by the Interreg Alpine Space program, over a 3-year period (April 2018 - April 2021).

The 10 partners involved are happy to present you a concise version of the findings of the projects and invite you to:

- Discover the ASIS definition of Social Innovation
- Understand the challenges Social Innovation can answer
- Get inspired from case studies of Social Innovation in Alpine Space
- Get to know existing tools and policies supporting Social Innovation in Alpine Space countries
- Explore ASIS country specific policy recommendations to better support Social Innovation
- Discover ASIS transnational policy recommendations
- Find out more about existing social impact measurement tools
- Explore ASIS software tool

You will find hereunder the detailed learning objectives of the SI Academy and the table of contents of the ebook.

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# Introduction and Objectives of the SI Academy Ebook

Dear reader, dear ASIS SI Academy participant, thank you for choosing our content. We are very excited to share with you all the findings that we managed to compile during the ASIS project.

Social Innovation is growing as it proposes new solutions to the social and environmental challenges around the world. Unfortunately, it seems that the definition and vision of Social Innovation changes from individual to individual and from region to region which complicates the implementation of policies and actions to support and finance Social Innovation.

In this document you will read “SI” as an abbreviation of “Social Innovation”.

## ASIS in a Nutshell

The ASIS project aims to encourage, support and promote Social Innovation in the Alpine Space area and to do it we identified a series of actions:

- Defining Social Innovation
- Identifying the main challenges
- Training Social Innovation stakeholders
- Developing Social Innovation funding schemes
- Adapting public policies to Social Innovation challenges

With ASIS SI Academy and accompanying ebook, we are hoping to explain our **new vision of innovation**<sup>1</sup>:

“as a new answer to social needs or societal challenges, met by Alpine area, regardless of the nature of innovation (technology, services, new uses...), through a collaborative approach that involves beneficiaries, users and affected stakeholders, that has a positive, sustainable and measurable impact.”

We, in the ASIS project<sup>2</sup>, believe that **Social Innovation is an answer to common societal challenges**. The social, economic and environmental context of Alpine Space highlights different issues related to the progressive aging of the population, the need to increase the capacity of SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) in order to respond to the globalized economy, the urgency to improve the living conditions in urban areas, the opportunity to improve governance among public administrations, the increase in mobility demand and the sustainability of the transportation system.

We want to make an impact in all Alpine countries by disseminating the project results to relevant stakeholders so that actors implementing Social Innovation projects can benefit from the concrete findings of the project. The ASIS

<sup>1</sup> The below definition was created and written by ASIS partners during the [first part of the project](#).

<sup>2</sup> ASIS [consortium partners](#) are: Chaire ESS - Lyon 2, Oxalis, CUAS, S2i, DA Kozjansko, Center Noordung, City of Turin, CCIAATO, Department of Isere, Amadeus Association

**guidelines and trainings** are mainly addressed to public authorities and are devised to transfer expertise about Social Innovation and enable them to better support Social Innovation projects. All ASIS guidelines and trainings have been developed in a joint participatory approach. The online trainings are designed in a way that all interested stakeholders can go through them independently and benefit from the learning experience at their own pace. They consist of a presentation, one or more videos to consolidate the training content as well as a quiz which allows training participants to test the knowledge they acquired through following the training.

**Social Innovation funding policies** give keys to understanding how to define success factors according to societal successful regional development. The overall goal of this part of the ASIS project is the determination of what factors together form a cluster or a success filter for innovation, success and sustainability. Within the frame of the ASIS project, a **software** that facilitates the selection of promising projects with social impact has been developed. This instrument has been designed to compare new projects with existing Social Innovation projects in the Alpine Space.

In the last part of the project we conducted a complete **analysis of the current policies** already implemented in partner countries. We also analysed the current conditions in order to establish a better and more comprehensive SI policy frame for the whole region.

The ASIS project is aiming to encourage the **development of new strategic actions** that can be implemented by national, regional or local public authorities, to support and encourage Social Innovation on their territories. The project should contribute to increase innovation capacities, Social Innovation visibility and most importantly, it should contribute to design new strategic policies on Social Innovation.

We hope you will become actors in this new vision of innovation. We have high hopes that you will be one of the many ambassadors of Social Innovation in your organization, city, region or country.

### Learning Objectives of the SI Academy

- Get to know each other (transnational actors in the Social Innovation ecosystem)
- Get to know the current state of Social Innovation in Alpine region
- Become actors and ambassadors of SI
- To be able to define **the new vision of 'classical' innovation as Social Innovation**
- To present the tools with which SI can be implemented more successfully
- Become inspired from concrete examples of Social Innovation in the Alpine Space Region
- Start supporting Social Innovation in your territory
- Start developing an action plan to implement a Social Innovation strategy into your organization, city, region or country

# MODULE 1

## Learning Objectives of this Module:

- Discover the ASIS definition of Social Innovation
- Understand the challenges Social Innovation can answer
- Get to know case studies of Social Innovation in the Alpine Space

## Learning Tools:

- [TRAINING #1 – A common vision of Social Innovation in the Alpine Space](#)
- [TRAINING #5 - ASIS project explainer video](#)
- Case studies: [from T1](#) (from 3:15 min), [T2](#) (multiple cases), [T6](#) (Social Impact Bond “Juvat”)

## Exercises: (instructions)

- Share your definition of Social Innovation
- Explain the role of public actors in support of Social Innovation

## Part 1 - A New Vision of Innovation

### Specific Learning Objectives:

- Understand what is Social Innovation
- Differentiate the various forms of Social Innovation
- Perceive the specificities that characterize Social Innovation processes

Many organizations of different sizes, coming from different sectors, define themselves as “social innovators” and actors of social transformation. These actors can benefit from numerous incubators and support organizations whose missions are to foster Social Innovation. Public policy actors also make reference to the idea of Social Innovation in their stated goals, calls for proposals and in their communications.

Social Innovation is a rich and complex concept. There is ample literature on the subject, both by academics and by public and community actors that need to be clarified and synthesized to get a common vision of Social Innovation.

### 1. Innovation and social innovation: a general perspective

Innovation is a social process that can take multiple forms. We tend to think first about technological innovation but innovations can also range from new products and services to cutting-edge business models that offer new ways to create and capture market value. Innovation can also impact marketing techniques, offering other ways to present, distribute and promote. Even the process of production or the organizational structure at the very heart of the firm can be objects of innovation.

## A disruptive social process...

Whatever the form, innovation changes the established order of conception, production or organization in economic and social activities. It drives a change of social norms and ways of thinking about a problem. Thus, it is often more important to look **at the process than at the output**. Conceiving Social Innovation as a process means that the process put in place to find a solution may in fact be the solution itself. The Social Innovation process is particularly activated by the inclusive, collaborative or cooperative approach when stakeholders may contribute to the definition of the problem, its design and finally its solution.

### ... focused on a social issue ...

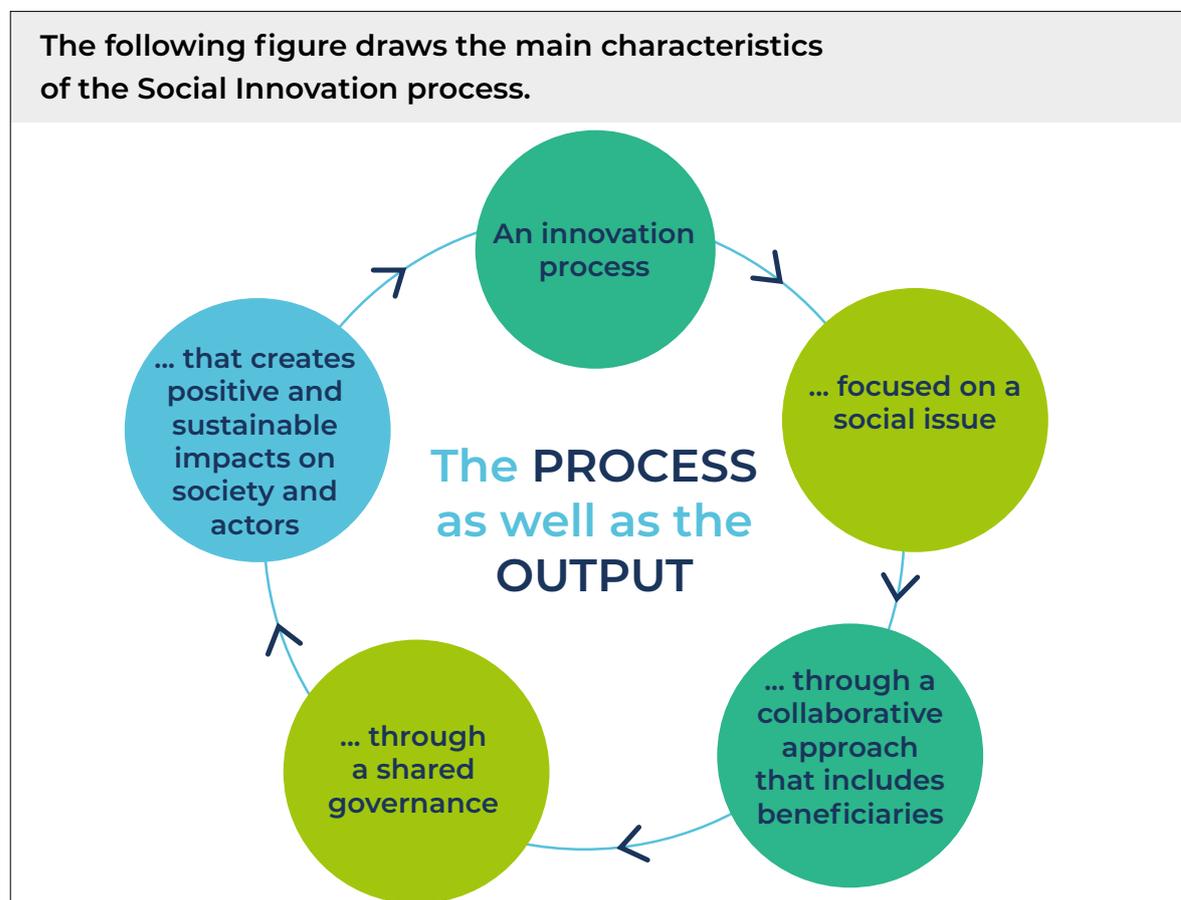
Social Innovation process is particularly targeted at **social problem solving**. It aims to respond to the many social and environmental issues that are becoming more and more important, even urgent, for both actors in the economic realm and for everyday citizens. Thus, in searching for solutions to face complexity, we are forced to take an inclusive view of the innovation process, bringing together its different dimensions: technological, commercial, social, and beyond.

*(Please go to part 2 of this module to read about challenges of Social Innovation process)*

### ... that creates positive and sustainable impacts on society and actors.

The process and the output of Social Innovation have to create positive and sustainable impacts on society, territories and actors. It introduces the challenge of the measure of these social impacts. If financial impacts are already quite hard to tackle, the social, environmental and process dimension of Social Innovation requires to design specific and new indicators.

*(Please go to part 1 of module 3 dedicated to social impact measurements)*

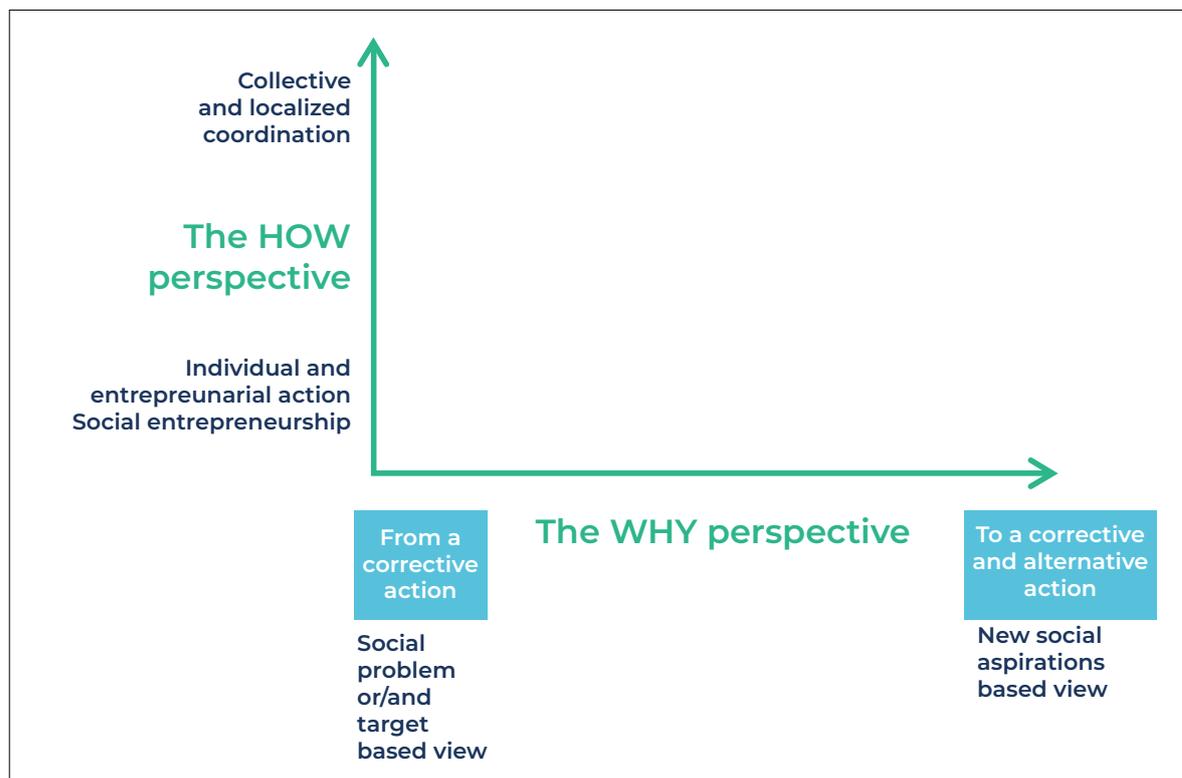


Source: ASIS Partners

## 2. A Common Social Innovation Process ... But different forms of social innovation

Social Innovation processes may be activated and generated by several actors such as non-profit organizations, public authorities or initiatives led by individual citizens. It can take different forms that can be considered through two dimensions:

- The **WHY dimension** that classifies projects according to the purpose of Social Innovation. We propose two extremes: a corrective action and an alternative action. A **corrective action** seeks to solve an observed social problem by pursuing equality, justice and empowerment, especially targeting priority populations and territories. An **alternative action** aims to transform social and economic rules, with an approach based on new social aspirations.
- The **HOW dimension**, whether it prioritizes **collective work and collaboration**, focusing on local and territorial approaches or instead **social entrepreneurship**, with a more individual and entrepreneurial approach, focused on developing new opportunities and socially responsible activities.



## To go further

- [Go to part 2 of this module](#) to read about the challenges of Social Innovation process
- [Go to part 1 of module 3](#) dedicated to social impact measurements
- See [video training #1](#) that focuses on the illustration of the different configurations of Social Innovation
- See [video training #2](#) that focuses on the Alpine Space strategy on Social Innovation

### Food for thought:

- Starting from this general frame, do you recognize an experience, initiative as a Social Innovation?
- How would you classify it according to the two dimensions we presented?

## Part 2 - Understanding Societal Challenges (and how Social Innovation can be an answer)

### Specific Learning Objectives:

- Discover the common challenges in the Alpine Space area
- Get to know the definition of 3 cooperation axes responding to the challenges
- Identification of ASP strategy framework on Social Innovation

### 1. What are the common challenges emerged in the Alpine space area ?

The social, economic and environmental context of Alpine Space highlights different issues.

The consequences of the economic crisis has led to reduction in the capacity of the nation states to respond to global challenges (climate change, unbalanced demographic development, urban distressed areas) with adequate policies focusing on growth, sustainable development and well-being.

Social Innovation in the last years has provided solutions and tools to facilitate the relationship among different stakeholders related to the progressive aging of the population, the need to increase the capacity of SMEs in order to respond to the globalized economy. The objective of this part is to **find out the common challenges in the Alpine Space area.**



The main challenge, nowadays, is to combine social policies, labour policies, economic development, looking at Social Innovation as a great opportunity of local development, to reduce inequalities among citizens. This new form of coordination and collaboration has to be implemented as an integrated bottom-up and participatory (or community-led) approach rather than a more traditional top-down approach. A multi-stakeholder and community-led governance based on co-creation processes are a great opportunity for territorial development and growth, supporting the provision of high-quality and cost-effective social initiatives.

### **What should we remember about the deliverables ASIS partners produced?**

One major thing to remember is that Social Innovation should become a “catalyst” for local communities. Social Innovation is able to enhance the potential of a single member of the community and is not only a policy tool to solve the problems of the disadvantaged part of the society. In this sense, Social Innovation changes the ordinary point of view of welfare policies, giving attention not to the disadvantage of the individual but to the human resources that the individual can provide. **Social Innovation becomes a local engine of development influencing not only the economy but mainly the ability to build social and relational capital.** In order for Social Innovation to be a long-lasting and sustainable process, systemic conditions or a system framework should be created.

Economic, social, legal and administrative conditions contribute to defining the ecosystem in which Social Innovation can emerge, develop and spread. In fact, **an ecosystem of Social Innovation can be understood as the set of all systemic resources that favor the development and implementation of Social Innovation initiatives.** As it emerged from ASIS partners’ territorial analysis, the Alpine area, is a territory with very different economic, social and environmental features, in which a variety of actors developed very different Social Innovation initiatives to respond to local challenges.

### **Methodology adopted**

To define the main challenges, the partners of the ASIS project adopted a methodology divided into three phases:

- Data collection to analyze the context and to make a benchmark
- Collection and analysis of research and publications to identify the challenges
- Identification of priority local challenges and workshops with target groups

Through a SWOT analysis, partners have investigated main issues in their country in order to gather internal and external factors so that it was possible to achieve priority challenges in their country.

Based on information provided by partners, it has been possible to identify some “systemic conditions” that can increase the success factors of Social Innovation development that should be taken into account in order to enhance the axis of work of the strategy.

## 2. Cooperation axes

The strategy defines 3 cooperation axes of the ASIS project that could respond, through Social Innovation, to the territorial challenges encountered in the Alpine Space region.

The 3 main challenges defined are:

- To tackle depopulation in rural and mountains areas and urban degradation
- To tackle unemployment
- To face the lack of health and social care services

We added a transversal topic: **climate change**.

The climate change effects are having a significant impact on the urban, rural and mountain environment, which varies according to climatic, geographical and socio-economic conditions.

The axes proposed in response to the common challenges in the Alpine Space identify the development of communities' resilience as the main key to tackle the main issues, and find support and tools to achieve the changes.



### THE 3 INTERVENTION AXES DEFINED ON THE BASIS OF THE EXPECTED CHANGE ARE:

- **Axis 1:** Strengthen local communities in the Alpine regions: promote development and livability in rural and mountains areas and promote regeneration processes in urban areas
- **Axis 2:** Develop new employment, occupational models and professional training
- **Axis 3:** Develop collaborative communities to support elderly and vulnerable groups

### From the axes to a Alpine Space strategy framework on Social Innovation

Each axis has been combined with operational goals providing the implementation of shared actions and tools on Social Innovation. Thanks to their definitions, a strategy framework on Social Innovation has been identified to set up and develop the Social Innovation strategy at transnational level. To organize the coherence and governance of Social Innovation supports, some strategic areas have been suggested as application and working fields for public authorities:

- Enabling and empowering the local community
- Engaging and connecting stakeholders
- Intentionally producing positive social impacts
- Simplifying funding and investing in governance

## Food for thought:

- Which challenges emerged above do you find in your region or municipality?
- Do you think the 3 strategy frameworks on Social Innovation identified could fit your local context?
- What does already exist to support Social Innovation challenges in your area?

## Part 3 - Case Studies

### Specific Learning Objectives:

- Transfer theory about Social Innovation into practice
- Learn from best practice examples how Social Innovation can look like
- Analyse challenges, projects and initiatives in your area

In the ASIS project, partners identified a lot of examples of Social Innovation in each region. As established before, Social Innovation is sometimes hard to recognize and certainly difficult to measure. However, there is an ever-growing number of initiatives and projects that aim at tackling social challenges in their region and therefore improve quality of life in their respective community.

### A successful Social Innovation is:

- A new answer to social needs or societal challenges, met by Alpine area, regardless of the nature of innovation (technology, services, new uses...) ...
- ... Through a collaborative approach that involves beneficiaries, users and affected stakeholders...
- ... That has a positive, sustainable and measurable impact.

### In practice, this can take many shapes or forms. A Social Innovation could be:

- A **new product** that tackles a social need of a specific group, like a moving aid for elderly wheelchair users
- Or a **new service** designed to tackle the same problem, for example a shopping service for elderly people with reduced mobility
- Or, from an **organizational point of view**, a government-funded program to better include elderly people into society or even a new law requiring all shops to provide wheelchair ramps

[Check for more information](#)

## Time to get inspired:

Take inspiration from the ***Social Innovation initiatives section*** on the ASIS platform where we showcase a lot of best practice examples of Social Innovation from all Alpine Space regions. The ASIS project has found that all regions in the Alpine Space face similar challenges, so a successful initiative from one country can offer a promising change of perspective and help us to think outside the box to tackle social issues we face in our own region.

### Social Innovation is all around – we just need to take a closer look

Now it is time to think of your local community and identify the social challenges as well as Social Innovations in **your** area:

- What are the **main social challenges** your community faces? – These can be very general like climate change, ageing society, high unemployment, but also more specific like rising or degrading housing prices, lack of public transportation in rural areas or insufficient coverage of a certain health service (like domestic care services, midwives, hearing aid specialists...).
- Can you think of any **initiative** tackling one or more of these **challenges**?
- Were there any new challenges that emerged through the **COVID-19 pandemic**? Were there any new solutions that were focused on overcoming the crisis?
- **How** are they trying to solve the societal issue? – Through a new product, a new service, the improvement of existing solutions, new ways of thinking, new structures, new forms of cooperation, new projects, new laws and regulations?
- Which **actors** are involved? – Local companies, social enterprises, public authorities, civil society organizations, individuals?
- **How** was the Social Innovation developed? – Was there cooperation between different stakeholders? Were the final beneficiaries of the innovation included in the development process?
- Why was the Social Innovation **successful** or why not? – Did the Social Innovation reach its intended target group? Was there enough funding? And most importantly: did it contribute to answering the societal need?

# MODULE 2

## Learning Objectives of this Module:

- Get to know existing tools and policies supporting Social Innovation in Alpine Space countries
- Explore ASIS country specific policy recommendations that better support Social Innovation
- Get to know ASIS transnational policy recommendations

## Learning Tools:

- Slides [T5](#)
- Video and slides [T7](#)
- ASIS recommendations to better support Social Innovation (ASIS Country Specific Public Policy Guide to Support Social Innovation and Logical framework for the implementation of new ASIS policies and instruments to support Social Innovation) - [ASIS project deliverables site](#)

## Exercises: (instructions)

- What Social Innovation initiatives & projects do you know in your organization, municipality, region or country?
- What can you do to better support Social Innovation in your organization, municipality, region or country?
- Start your own action plan

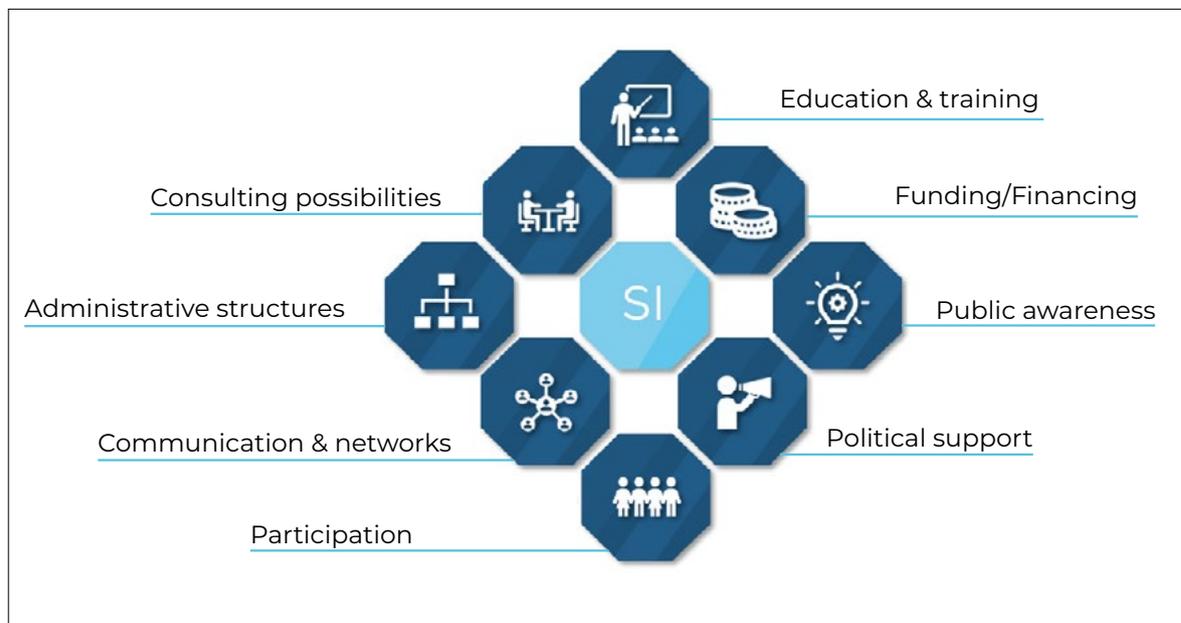
## Part 1 - Existing Tools to Support Social Innovation for Public Actors

### Specific Learning Objectives:

- Gain an overview of the current state of Social Innovation policies in different regions as well as in the Alpine Space as a whole
- Explore various factors that can affect Social Innovation policies
- Discover and understand good practice examples that already exist

### 1. Current State of Social Innovation Policies within the Alpine Space

Social Innovation is a complex subject area, which is determined and influenced by many factors in the realm of public policy. Some of these determinants are shown here as examples:



In **Austria** there is a growing interest concerning Social Innovation in academia and research. Civil society organizations remain the main and most numerous initiators of Social Innovations. In the state sector, Social Innovation has gained great prominence with the publication of the “Strategy of the Federal Government for Research, Technology and Innovation“ (March 2011).

A survey conducted in **Italy** in the three-year period (2015-2018) shows that, over the past few years, all the Italian regions have started or implemented actions connected, albeit indirectly, to Social Innovation. Multiple operational plans have also included Social Innovation in their contents in the last two years. The City of Turin has been the most active city in Italy in the field of public innovation including Social Innovation. They have implemented some extraordinary innovations and are actively communicating good practices to the cities across Italy and Europe.

In **Germany**, Social Innovation is mentioned as one of the future challenges which needs to be directly addressed developing new and tailoring existing support programs. Thus, the German High-Tech Strategy will directly target Social Innovations and social enterprises during the coming years. As a part of this approach, increased involvement of civil society, active cooperation between diverse stakeholders, and the application of non-traditional, more experimental approaches to innovation support, including new business models, and targeted transfer and start-up support have been recognised as fundamental.

In **France**, Social Innovation currently focuses on entrepreneurial initiatives, although citizen movements have always been a fertile ground for Social Innovation. Even though the values and the functioning were existing before, the social and solidarity economy (SSE, or ESS in French), in a way closely linked with Social Innovation, has been officially recognised by the 2014 SSE Law. This legal recognition has allowed the SSE and Social Innovation to scale up, being accepted as relevant in the overall economy. Strengthening the existing networks and functioning, empowering employees and citizens through more cooperation, building a real strategy so the SSE can contribute to the growth of the country, inclu-



ding the values of sustainable development, solidarity and community. However, there is no complete overlap between the SSE and Social Innovation: they are mainly different by their governance even if both share social and environmental values.

The concept of social enterprise and Social Innovation is very new to **Slovenia**. It was first used in the context of ESF-funded pilot projects launched in 2009 to support the development of social enterprises. The first study of the current state of social entrepreneurship in Slovenia was made in 2005, funded by PHARE regional funds and issued by JAPTI (the Public Agency for Entrepreneurship and Foreign Investments). Slovenia adopted the Act on Social Entrepreneurship in 2011 which, among other things, provides a definition of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise. Its 2018 amendment also defines Social Innovation as “solutions to societal needs and problems for which the market and the public sector have no answer”.

More specific data on existing policies are available for further reading on [this link](#).

Despite this progress and the increased interest and political will to further develop and support Social Innovation, many challenges are still remaining to make Social Innovation a real concern. In order to gain a more comprehensive picture of the current state of Social Innovation policies within the Alpine Space as a whole and the determining factors, a joint SWOT analysis was prepared by all project members based on the assessments of their own countries.

## 2. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of Social Innovation in the Alpine Region

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Increased awareness of the concept of SI	Partially low awareness of the benefits
Increased focus on SI in research and education	Insufficient information and training in areas of practical implementation of SI supporting policies, therefore lack of knowledge and skills
New local, regional and national policies that support SI	Policies are oftentimes focused specifically on SI and do not include SI as a cross-cutting subject in other areas, which could broaden the scope and number of beneficiaries  Lack of funding for SI projects and initiatives
Emergence of SI initiatives at local, regional and national level	Lack of networks connecting regions and countries within Alpine Space

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Consolidation of local ecosystems enabling SI processes (networks, start-ups, incubators, business sector, young entrepreneurs...)	Low sustainability of SI efforts due to isolated measures and ventures whereby the potential for synergies is not used
Emergence of transnational activities supporting SI in the Alpine Space	Complexification, bureaucratization
Increased visibility of SI and the benefits of its integration in many different areas	Use of the term SI for public relations and marketing rather than to set socially innovative actions
Creation of a common understanding and data on SI in order to be able to implement future measures on an evidence-based and cross-border basis	Fragmentation of funding bodies, political actors/policy makers, public administrations when deciding on objectives and goals to further promote and utilize SI

### 3. Inspiring Existing Tools or Policies that Support Social Innovation in the Different Countries of the Alpine Space

#### European Level

##### European Social Catalyst Fund (ESCF) – European Union

[www.euscf.eu](http://www.euscf.eu)

#### What they do:

This is a recent initiative, launched in January 2020. The ESCF mobilises public and private resources (philanthropy, solidarity finance, European public funds under the Horizon 2020 Program on Research and Innovation), to achieve a leverage effect in support of the replication, across Europe, of proven Social Innovation.

#### Why this is inspiring:

The ESCF shows that the European Commission's research budget is increasingly considering Social Innovation issues. The fund has a real European dimension, since the foundations support projects outside the national territory, by pooling their resources within the coalitions of foundations. Moreover, the fund's method has the particularity that it doesn't aim at the growth of the funded structures, but at the replication of Social Innovations by adapting it to the contexts.

## Multiple Actions Towards Social Innovation from the European Commission

[ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/policy/innovation/social\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/policy/innovation/social_en)

### What they do:

The European Commission is highly invested in Social Innovation issues and is involved in multiple actions with different types of actors, both public and private, from funding to impact measurement, but also networking, research, competitions, or support to social enterprises. Take a look at the link above!

### Why this is inspiring:

The main directives and priorities of the European Commission impact the national policies of the Member States. The fact that an entity as large and important as the European Union is interested and investing in the field of Social Innovation in various ways shows how forward-looking the concept is seen as a way to bring solutions to the societal and environmental challenges of the 21st century.

## Austria

### Extraordinary Directive «Social Innovations for Labor Market Integration» (Sonderrichtlinie „Soziale Innovationen für Arbeitsmarktintegration“)

#### What they do:

Social Businesses (SB) are companies that primarily address social problems and solve them with innovative solutions and market-financed business models. In order to assess the potential of social business in Austria, the Council for Research and Technology Development, together with the Federal Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection ("Social Ministry") and the Austrian Economic Service Agency (Austria Wirtschaftsservice Gesellschaft mbH), commissioned the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration in 2015 to conduct a study.

To realize the growth potential, the SB study proposes different measures, of which the Social Business Call "Social Innovations for Labor Market Integration" was derived from. It creates a financing offer for innovative social enterprises, which is complemented by sector development measures. The aim is to foster a wide range of Social Innovations.

#### Why this is inspiring:

The procedure, that is to say the preparation of a study and thus the systematic collection of framework conditions, influencing factors and potentials, enabled the collection of measures and the creation of financing possibilities. These are well accepted by political decision-makers and thus widely communicated, reaching a broad audience of potential beneficiaries.



## Prospect: labour (PERSPEKTIVE:ARBEIT)

### What they do:

“Prospect: labour” pursues a holistic and individualized approach for women affected by violence who are seeking access to the labor market. Qualified, experienced social workers address the life situation of the individual participant and work with her to develop personal and professional goals, which are then implemented step by step. Psychosocial support, measures for financial stabilization, qualification and job coaching are coordinated and combined. Existing programs are used and, if necessary, supplemented with additional offers to close gaps.

### Why this is inspiring:

Several programs that deal with the support of vulnerable groups often focus on one specific area only. “Prospect: labour”, however, tries to take related areas such as childcare, lack of social embeddedness etc. into account as well and focuses on empowerment and building networks. The concept was tested in a pilot phase by allowing all women affected by violence in the pilot region to participate free of charge and was evaluated thoroughly. The experiences and results of the pilot phase were summarized in a guidebook, which is intended to facilitate and enable the implementation of the concept in other regions as well.

## Italy

### Social Impact Agenda for Italy

[www.socialimpactagenda.it](http://www.socialimpactagenda.it)



### What they do:

Social Impact Agenda (SIA) for Italy was created in 2016 to disseminate the experience of social impact investments and demonstrate that it is possible to create a new economy that integrates economic sustainability and positive social impact. SIA is an open and inclusive organization, which proposes to aggregate all the realities in Italy that are involved in the challenge of impact investing: investing for impact and not only for profit.

### Why this is inspiring:

Social Impact Agenda for Italy: nurtures dialogue and exchange of experiences at national and international level; contributes to the study and deepening of social impact models and instruments of social impact finance; develops and disseminates knowledge of the impact investment and social entrepreneurship. SIA represents Italy in the Global Steering Group for Impact Investment - GSG that aims to accelerate the impact investing movement globally and bring the sector to the forefront of markets around the world.



## “Regulations on Collaboration Between Citizens and the Administration for the Care and Regeneration of Urban Common Goods”, a Technical-Juridical Instrument

[labsus.org/i-regolamenti-per-lamministrazione-condivisa-dei-beni-comuni](https://labsus.org/i-regolamenti-per-lamministrazione-condivisa-dei-beni-comuni)

### **What they do:**

The Regulations on collaboration between citizens and the Administration for the care and regeneration of urban common goods is firstly a national regulation that municipalities adopted in their practices from 2014 (the Municipality of Bologna being the first one). It became a technical-juridical instrument, spread throughout the national territory, to support and enhance the own initiative of citizens, single or associated, for purposes of general interest.

### **Why this is inspiring:**

This example shows how a national regulation can become a widespread practice for many Italian municipalities, as it opened a real process of change that has fostered the sharing of responsibilities in the care and regeneration of the city, allowing citizens to be part of stipulating "cooperation agreements". This regulation is also what allowed the constitutional principle of subsidiarity to enter into the Italian Constitution with the art. 118 in 2001.

## Three-Year Program for Social Innovation (2018-2020)

[www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/innovazione-sociale](http://www.funzionepubblica.gov.it/innovazione-sociale)

### **What they do:**

The Department of Public Administration launched a Fund for Social Innovation that finances interventions, in the framework of a three-year Program for Social Innovation, to strengthen the capacity of public administrations to carry out Social Innovation interventions that would generate new solutions, models and approaches for the satisfaction of social needs, with the involvement of actors from the private sector.

### **Why this is inspiring:**

The launch of this program is an inspiring example as it is not about what public actors finance but concerns directly a change of practices and intervention within the public sector itself, in order to participate more effectively to the answer of remaining social challenges, for instance by opening themselves to collaboration with private actors. It is actually a challenge to reconcile the new models and tools of social impact with the organizational and management logic of public administrations.



### What they do:

"French Impact" was launched in 2018 as a national banner that offers a range of programs to enhance and boost cooperation between a diversity of actors (public and private), working on social and environmental innovation projects. This banner is attributed to French territorial Social Innovation ecosystems and aims to give more visibility, effectiveness and scaling-up to social utility projects that answer societal challenges, as well as financing promising projects. This is a growing actor in the french Social Innovation landscape: today, 28 territories benefit from this label and the dedicated program. **"Federate, boost and transform"**

### Why this is inspiring:

To achieve this, French Impact creates alliances between social and solidarity economy actors, public authorities and the private sector, convinced that we must "do together" to provide a sustainable response to the major societal challenges of the 21st century. This banner and program allows to recognize territories that have started a multi-actor cooperation around Social Innovation and encourage actors from different sectors to put their forces together, through a more regular and effective cooperation and focused on common challenges to solve.

## TIGA - High Ambition Innovation Territories Program



### What they do:

The TIGA program, led by the "Banque des Territoires" (Bank for the territories), a national public financing actor, is a specific program, part from a national strategy (Pia3 - Investing for the Future), that targets territorial innovation and is specifically driven towards a multistakeholder approach to answer social and environmental challenges. TIGA aims at selecting and helping specific territories to become large scale testing zones to enhance sustainable solutions and new models of local governance.

### Why this is inspiring:

This program is inspiring both because of the actor in charge of it (a national public financing actor dedicated to finance innovative projects that impact territories) and because of the orientation of the finances (450 million euros over a 10 coming years) towards solutions that answer social and environmental challenges, on 24 French selected territories.



### What they do:

“Start-up de Territoires” has little to do with what you imagine when talking about startups! This now well-known movement is actually about allowing the emergence and accompanying the realisation of different entrepreneurial projects with solutions, concerned about their impact and offering services or products that have the highest impact on inhabitants of the territory and in the sectors of tomorrow. Basically, Start-up de Territoires is a facilitating tool to gather all the actors from a specific territory around the table (business, charities, academic, public institutions...) to cogitate to new projects and dynamic around a range of topics. Their motto: **“Think big, start small, go fast!”**

### Why this is inspiring:

Besides the fact that this movement is undeniably allowing to break down the barriers between actors and sectors to find collective solutions to local needs, it has been launched by a private group but is now largely supported by public actors, not only financing the movement but also being active actors in the realization of the events and the implementation of the following programs to accompany projects.

## Germany

### A Coalition Treaty that Recognizes Social Innovation

#### What they do:

First, it is to mention that in Germany, even if a change is in progress, Social Innovation and social entrepreneurship are (still) rarely explicitly mentioned and supported by public actors. Publicly-funded activities specifically targeting social entrepreneurship can be found in Germany. This progressive change can be seen for example in the coalition treaty signed in February 2018 between the German Christian-Democratic and Social-Democratic parties. It explicitly mentions Social Innovation and social entrepreneurship, as one of the future challenges which need to be directly addressed developing new and tailoring existing support programs. As a part of this approach, various national strategies will target more directly socially innovative and social impact projects, which will increase the involvement of civil society, active cooperation between diverse stakeholders, and the application of non-traditional, more experimental approaches to innovation, including new business models.

#### Why this is inspiring:

As said, Social Innovation in Germany is still not a widely-accepted concept, and nearly no publicly-funded activities specifically target social entrepreneurship or Social Innovation initiatives. This national coalition and political recognition of Social Innovation is a step for the country that will lead to the orientation of

national strategies toward Social Innovation, as it is the case for example for the German High-Tech Strategy that will directly target Social Innovation and social enterprises during the coming years.

## Regional Consideration and Vision for Social Innovation - The Case of Baden-Württemberg Region

[wm.baden-wuerttemberg.de/de/service/publikation/did/innovationsstrategie-baden-wuerttemberg-1](http://wm.baden-wuerttemberg.de/de/service/publikation/did/innovationsstrategie-baden-wuerttemberg-1)

### What they do:

As it is documented in the Innovation strategy (link above), Baden-Württemberg has a comprehensive, systemic understanding of innovation, embracing technological, organizational, process, social and other innovation aspects. Social Innovation and social entrepreneurship are issues which start to receive increased attention on the regional policy level. Indeed, the Innovation strategy which targets 4 fields that are one of today's main societal and environmental issues to tackle:

1. Sustainable mobility
2. Environmental technologies, sustainable energy technologies and resource efficiency
3. Health and health care
4. Information and communication technologies, green IT, intelligent products

### Why this is inspiring:

If the concept of Social Innovation at the national level of Germany is still not really considered, the regional levels of Germany are much more concerned with the topic, depending on the historical background and specificities of the territory. With the example of Baden-Württemberg region and their innovative background, it appears that Social Innovation is becoming an important consideration in innovation in general and a large number of activities are now taking place in the region at the moment, supported by both public and private stakeholders and sources.

## Slovenia

### Social Entrepreneurship Act

#### What they do:

The concept of social enterprise and Social Innovation is very new to Slovenia. At national level, the comprehension of the concept started in 2011 when the Social Entrepreneurship Act has been adopted. Since 2015 the main responsibility for implementation of the Act lies with the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology and its special sector, the Department for Social Entrepreneurship.



Later on, in 2018, the Social Entrepreneurship Act was under novelization and is now for the first time using the term “social economy” in legal sense. Social economy is defined as an umbrella concept that includes:

1. social enterprises
2. non-profit, non-governmental organizations - NGOs
3. companies for employment of disabled people and employee-rehabilitation centres
4. cooperatives

### **Why this is inspiring:**

Slovenia is very supportive of technological innovations and the support comes from the government as well as private investors. If we try to look for Social Innovation, we need to dig deeper into society and grassroots movements. They are impacting systemic change and if Slovenia was able to put social entrepreneurship into legislation, we can expect the same to happen with Social Innovation as a new vision of innovation.

## **Procurement of Local Produce for Public Institutions**

### **What they do:**

Grassroots movements started in 2015. They introduced and demanded that local produce be used in providing meals in kindergarten and school. The Ministry of Agriculture<sup>3</sup> prepared guidelines that differed from regular procurement processes – namely, it was decided that in this process food quality (eco and bio production) and vicinity of the producer was one of the main conditions for procurement. Regional development agencies stepped in and created awareness programs both for public institutions and local food producers. At the end, municipalities were in charge of implementing the procurement process. It was and still is an important and successful project in many municipalities across Slovenia.

### **Why this is inspiring:**

Normally the “price criteria” is the first and last condition in the procurement process in public institutions in Slovenia. In the above described case, we finally see the progress and movement toward sustainable, quality and health focused as well as actual direct benefit for our kids and youth as preconditions. We believe and hope this should and will become a precedence in the future procurement processes country wide.

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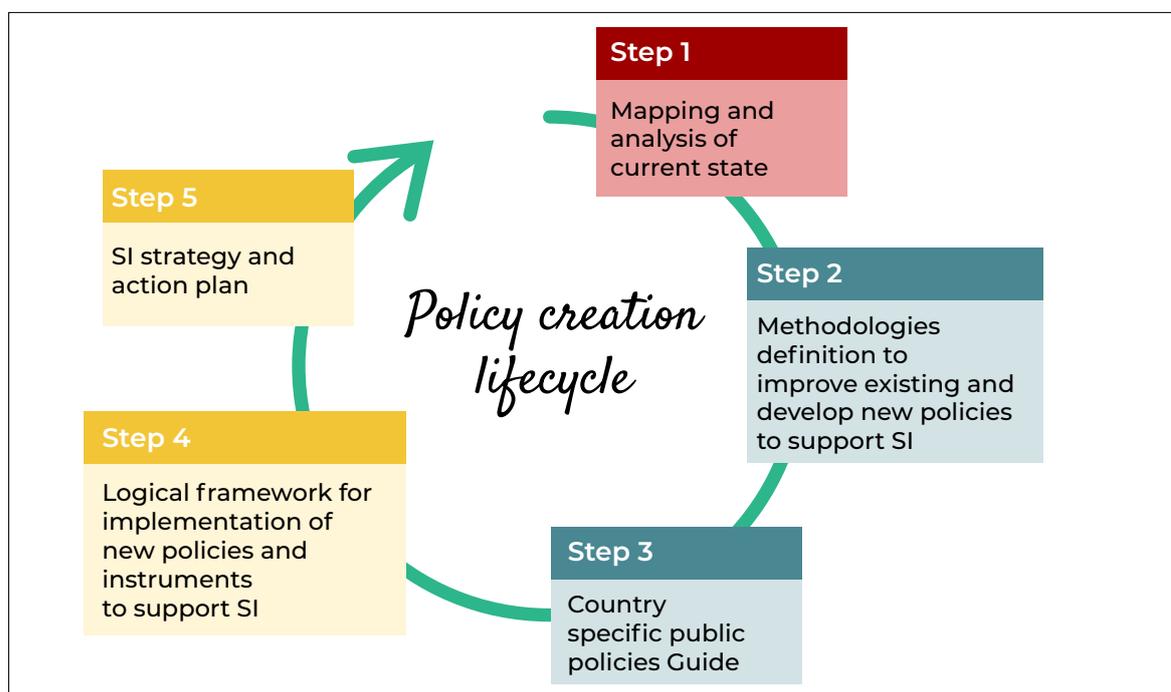
<sup>3</sup> [Za več kakovostne lokalne hrane v javnih zavodih | Naša super hrana \(nasasuperhrana.si\), file8dbb8ba386376f8.pdf \(lasnotranjska.si\), Pomen lokalne hrane in načelo kratkih verig v dobavi živil | GOV.SI](#)

## Part 2 - How to Better Support Social Innovation as a Public Actor?

### Specific Learning Objectives:

- Get inspired by a list of local policy recommendations
- Get to know ASIS global recommendations
- Start exploring what you can do and how you can support SI

In the ASIS project, we followed a methodology and a process that led us to develop local and global policy recommendations to better support Social Innovation. Below you can see a lifecycle image that shows where in this process our local and global policy recommendations came to be.



As seen in the image, we first made research and mapped the existing public policies and tools in each country, region or municipality. After that, we included local stakeholders in a participatory process, we developed ideas of new possible public policies that would benefit a certain region and the development of Social Innovation. From those exchanges, came the below list of recommendations. This below list is as inspiration for you as a public actor to create and envision how you can support Social Innovation in your organization, city, region or country.

### a. Specific (sub-)programs to support social entrepreneurship

- Make funding opportunities for social enterprises more accessible and transparent
- Increase flexibility of start-up funding by expanding the program to social enterprises



## **b. Local crowdfunding as alternative financing instruments for Social Innovation projects**

- Making financing available for Social Innovations on a local level
- Involving different actors in the support of Social Innovations

## **c. Creating temporary innovation spaces for specific social challenges**

- Bringing together actors with different backgrounds
- Establishing creative spaces for citizens, enabling citizens to develop and implement innovative ideas

## **d. Public procurement regulations to enable procurement of innovative solutions**

- Enable innovative and sustainable procurement from social enterprises and other sources, foster Social Innovations through public procurement
- Establish criteria for public procurement that include a focus on Social Innovation (innovation, social aspects, sustainability, price...)

## **e. Combining competitions for Social Innovations on regional or local level with a participatory approach**

- Better cooperation between different actors, especially between economic and social actors
- Involve public in the identification of social issues to be addressed by Social Innovation in a regional or local context
- Funding of Social Innovation initiatives not depending on the organizational form of the initiative, also including projects that are not initiated by a company

## **f. Statistical and analytical data collection about Social Innovation sector**

- Coordinate monitoring of statistics for all groups of Social Innovation actors and the social economy sector
- Prepare annual reports for all groups of subjects of Social Innovation and social economy
- New records of social economy entities at the ministry level

## **g. Implement methodology to measure social impact**

- Develop a methodology for measuring social impact
- Develop a system for training social economy stakeholders on measuring social impact and conduct training workshops

## **h. Inform public actors about the SI ecosystem and SI state of play**

- Informing all stakeholders in the public sector about social economy and Social Innovation
- Motivating public sector stakeholders to contribute to improving the conditions for social economy and Social Innovation development
- Procedural and procedural improvements for social economy entities working on Social Innovation projects and initiatives



### **i. Grants for the development of supporting environment for Social Innovation**

- Provide technical support to start-ups and incorporation of social economy entities & Social Innovation initiatives
- Strengthen professional standards in the social economy and Social Innovation sector (training of experts)
- Strengthen networking between social economy entities and Social Innovation community

### **j. Grants for development of social economy & Social Innovation start-ups and initiatives**

- Empowering communities to develop initiatives with the potential to develop the social economy/Social Innovation initiatives
- Launch of new social economy entities/Social Innovation initiatives
- Strengthening existing social economy entities/Social Innovation initiatives by encouraging the development of new products and additional employment
- Strengthening existing social economy entities by promoting the democratic organization of social economy entities

### **k. Call for pilot projects for establishment of Social Innovation development centers (Competence centers)**

- Establishment of a development center for Social Innovation
- Establishment of a development center for social entrepreneurship
- Establishment of a development center for cooperatives

### **l. Others**

- Institutionalization of cooperative options in the sense of legal regulations and organizational processes with a simultaneous, temporarily limited increase in human resources to meet the short-term needs of less mobile groups or other vulnerable groups
- Establishments of networks between institutions to provide services that would otherwise be protected by a paywall, in order to be able to offer educational services across the population
- Social Innovation should not be seen as a single, isolated goal to be achieved, but as a cross-cutting subject in the activities of local and regional economic development institutions
- Promoting social entrepreneurship at regional level through economic development institutions in order to create jobs that generate sustainable added value for society

[More data on country specific policy recommendations are available for further reading on this link \(ASIS Country Specific Public Policy Guide to Support Social Innovation\).](#)

In the process of developing the 3 global recommendations, consortium partners held numerous online meetings and email exchanges. On top of this, each partner has had an intensive cooperation with local Social Innovation stakeholders to achieve and obtain the information needed.

ASIS consortium created a list of recommendations and actions and came up with 7 common policy recommendations:

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS	SHORT SYNTHESIS
<b>Promote innovative grants and funding opportunities for Social Innovation</b>	Develop collaborative infrastructures to increase innovative funding schemes. Launch cooperative, participatory and cross-disciplinary calls for proposals. Adapt regional and economic promotion and development.
<b>Develop social impact measurements</b>	Create social impact measurement methodology. Implement these measurements in funded projects and in public policies in general. Systemize the criteria for social impact and classical innovation financing tools.
<b>Support social entrepreneurship ecosystem</b>	Having specific actions toward social entrepreneurs to support them in the emergence and development of their project.
<b>Use public procurement as a leverage for Social Innovation</b>	Enable innovative and sustainable procurement and foster Social Innovation through public procurement. Establish criteria for public procurement that includes a focus on Social Innovation.
<b>Build a shared knowledge space and gather common data on Social Innovation</b>	Conduct statistical and analytical data collection. Carry out a shared diagnosis of the unmet social and environmental needs. Share this info with the public sector.



<p><b>Build a supporting environment for Social Innovation. Raise awareness of Social Innovation</b></p>	<p>Develop/Establish innovation centers (Social Innovation competence/development centers) to strengthen the Social Innovation community through coworking spaces, incubators, open labs, accelerators (training programs)... Places to facilitate cooperation on innovation projects. Support Social Innovation projects in vulnerable areas. Connect the social entrepreneurship ecosystem with other actors.</p>
<p><b>Integrate Social Innovation approach in public action. Innovate within public institutions.</b></p>	<p>Institutionalized linking of public and private networks. Facilitate socially innovative cooperation models between public and private actors. A network of Social Innovation ambassadors within public institutions. Integrate Social Innovation approach in public action. (Social Innovation competitions). Strengthening cooperation between public and private actors to create networks and new ways of collaboration.</p>

The three chosen recommendations and their short synthesis as described below are the basis for our ongoing process of creating the logical framework for implementation of ASIS policies and instruments to support SI (Logical framework for the implementation of new ASIS policies and instruments to support Social Innovation - you can find the document on our [ASIS deliverable page](#)).

<p><b>TRANSNATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p>	<p><b>SHORT SYNTHESIS</b></p>
<p><b>Promote innovative grants and funding opportunities for Social Innovation</b></p>	<p>Develop collaborative infrastructure to increase innovative funding schemes. Launch cooperative, participatory and cross-disciplinary calls for proposals. Adapt regional and economic promotion and development.</p>
<p><b>Support social entrepreneurship ecosystem</b></p>	<p>Having specific actions toward social entrepreneurs to support them in the emergence and development of their project.</p>



<p><b>Integrate Social Innovation approach in public action</b></p>	<p>Institutionalized linking of public and private networks. A network of Social Innovation ambassadors within public institutions. Integrate Social Innovation approach in public action. (Social Innovation competitions). Strengthening cooperation between public and private actors to create networks and new ways of collaboration.</p>
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Consortium partners have created groups of individuals from partner organizations and have created a draft logical framework for each of the policy recommendations. We have then organized transnational workshops with international experts to make each logical framework more relevant. Below we are explaining each recommendation in more detail.

**a. Promote innovative grants and funding opportunities for Social Innovation**

- Develop collaborative infrastructure to increase innovative funding schemes
- Launch cooperative, participatory and cross-disciplinary calls for proposals
- Adapt regional economic promotion and development

**b. Support social entrepreneurship ecosystem**

- Having specific actions toward social entrepreneurs to support them in the emergence and development of their projects.
- Mobilizing and engaging local and regional political decision-makers who support the process
- Measures to raise awareness by communicating best practices through various channels and institutions
  - Creating a platform (e.g. online) that gives social entrepreneurs the opportunity to present their work and concepts and to exchange ideas with each other
  - Providing information about possibilities of financial support as well as advice on how to become active in this field
  - Providing guidance and information e.g. about labour market related issues and recruiting (legal and administrative procedures)
  - Using local media, which reach a large audience especially in rural areas

**c. Integrate Social Innovation approach in public action (Innovate in Public Administration)**

There are many ways in which public actors can support Social Innovation, as multiple as their levers and competences. Each institution, according to its competences, its geographical scope of intervention and the context of its territory, can determine the levers it wishes to activate to support Social Innovation. But one thing is certain: it all starts from inside! A wave of modernization is taking place in many public institutions: changes in managerial practices, more networking



and cross-functionality, simplification of procedures, increasing consideration of the principles of sustainable development, new forms of public policies-making and project management, citizen participation... These public innovations can take many forms. These new forms of public action (or updated practices!) are levers of support for Social Innovation in the sense that they increasingly integrate the principles of Social Innovation and participate actively in supporting and collaborating with local actors of Social Innovation.

### **Food for thought:**

- Do you think of any **initiatives in your region** already implementing one or more of these suggestions?
- Which suggestion could be **implemented in your community**? What social challenge could it solve?
- Which **actors should work together** in order to implement one of the suggestions?
- Did new initiatives emerge during the **COVID-19 pandemic**? Can they be continued also in the future?

# MODULE 3

## Learning Objectives of this Module:

- Get to know existing social impact measurement tools
- Get to know and explore ASIS software tool

## Learning Tools:

- [TRAINING #3 - How to identify promising Social Innovation projects](#)
- [GUIDELINE #1 - Social impact evaluation and indicators](#)
- [GUIDELINE #3 - How do public authorities face social impact measurement?](#)

## Exercises: (instructions)

- Test ASIS software tool with one local Social Innovation project case
- Build your own action plan for supporting Social Innovation in your municipality, region or country

## Part 1 - Focus on Impact Measurement

### Specific Learning Objectives:

- Understand the underlying logic of social impact measurement
- Approach some existing evaluation tools
- Understand the difference between indicators and evaluation process

### Why?

As a public authority, you can be interested in **social impact evaluation** (or social impact measurement) for different goals:

- Justify your spending in a constrained budgetary context and with a constant growth of social needs
- Evaluate the impact of projects that you financially support
- Evaluate the efficiency of your own policies in the long run (for example, check the impact on beneficiaries in regard to the allocated resources)
- Revisit your relationship with stakeholders by conducting an evaluation approach

### Where to start?

Before entering the process of defining indicators, you should also define what is really important to measure. Social impact is multidimensional: it is not focused on one dimension. It covers dimensions such as economic value creation, politics, societal, environmental, and well-being or fulfillment.

Also, social impact measurement depends both on:

- **what you want to assess**
- **and on the local reality, the pressing social challenges of your territory, the local social needs and expectations, the local stakeholder ecosystem...**

Having a good understanding of both aspects is more than essential for an effective social evaluation process. You should question the dimensions and criteria to address. We recommend to start with a few evaluation dimensions and a few indicators: the ones that matter the most for you. It is not useful and often counterproductive to evaluate too many dimensions and set too many indicators as you won't be able to focus properly on them. **Remember: choose what really matters for you!**

## There are different methods and tools

The general method can be described in 8 steps:

**Figure 5** 8 steps to conduct an impact measurement

	Questions to ask	Advices/Tools
<b>1</b> Framing the measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the objectives?</li> <li>• For who?</li> <li>• What for?</li> <li>• How?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage employees in the evaluation</li> <li>• Develop a culture of sharing and co-development.</li> <li>• Match the process with your intern process.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> Stakeholders mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are the stakeholders?</li> <li>• Which ones to study?</li> <li>• Which ones to involve in the assessment?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Brainstorm:</b> draw a list of stakeholders: internal, connected, external.</li> <li>• Interview them individually or collectively.</li> <li>• Map of prioritization</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> Describe the social mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is my social mission?</li> <li>• What are the targets?</li> <li>• What are the issues?</li> <li>• What are the key activities?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Brainstorm</b></li> <li>• Interviews to check the achievements of the objectives set by the structure: main issues identified and activities put in place to solve the issues.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b> Social impact mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the expected impacts of my action ? What are the impacts of the structure I support/finance?</li> <li>• What unexpected impacts have been observed?</li> <li>• What limited scope of impacts to keep for the study?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map of the impacts by making an exhaustive list (bibliographic search, interview field expert, indicators IRIS – See question 10</li> <li>• Prioritize them in order to maintain a relevant and realistic scope.</li> <li>• Plan the strategy (Change theory, U theory)</li> </ul>
<b>5</b> Indicators definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to measure the mapped impacts?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop multi-criteria approach. For a more detailed approach See Question 6 on «how to define and choose relevant indicators»</li> </ul>
<b>6</b> Finding the adequate methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to evaluate the changes?</li> <li>• How to collect the data?</li> <li>• By who?</li> <li>• When ?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frame Grid</li> <li>• Bibliographic search</li> <li>• To go further see Question 8. «What are the different methodologies to evaluate social impact?»</li> </ul>
<b>7</b> Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to define the sample of the interviewed population?</li> <li>• Which tool can I use to create a questionnaire?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of questionnaire: online survey tools</li> <li>• Making an Interview guide</li> </ul>
<b>8</b> Data analysis and restitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to analyze?</li> <li>• How to restore the results of the study?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format of the results feedback diverge according to the target, communication objectives. Videos, infography</li> <li>• Guide for Impact reporting: SRS Social Reporting Standards, GRI</li> </ul>

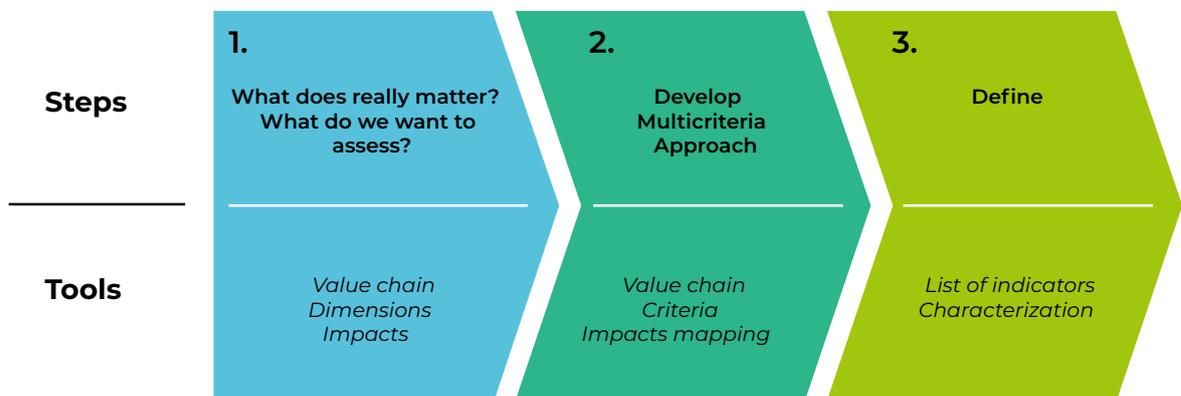
There is a large number of existing evaluation methods, each one with its set of advantages and drawbacks. When choosing a method, it is particularly relevant to start from the desired objective: What question(s) does the approach seek to answer?

Some of the well known methods are:

- **Outcomes method Star™** that allows you to manage the changes experienced by beneficiaries of social programs
- **SROI (Social Return on Investment)** that is composed of principles (involvement of the community in the process, stakeholders, transparency, etc.) and steps (choosing indicators, demonstrating causality, calculating a ratio via monetization) to guide the evaluation process

## How to choose indicators?

**Figure 3** Schematic approach to define indicators



For social impact, the choice of indicators is based on the impact you want to measure. Before finding indicators, you have to know which impact you want to measure. This requires to start from stakeholders' needs and the organization's mission, then take into account desired and undesired impacts, focus on a specific area for the evaluation, and then define the impact to be measured.

In the end, an indicator set must find an answer to relevance, exhaustivity and realism purposes. A unique and synthetic indicator does not exist. To bring exhaustivity and precision, a multicriteria approach has to be conducted. In order to find and manage indicators, three valuable resources and internationally recognized tools are presented in ASIS guidelines: Global Value Exchange IRIS Base Outcomes Stars.

### To go further:

- [ASIS Guidelines N°1](#) - "Social impact evaluation and indicators"
- [ASIS Guidelines N°3](#) - "How public authorities face social impact measurement - Public tender on "Activate Green Community Hub Services, to engage local community"

## Part 2 - Demonstration and Explanation of the ASIS Software

In the next section, the ASIS software, which was developed in the context of the project and is available as a free, open-source tool to anyone who wants to use or further develop it, is described in more detail.

### Specific Learning Objectives:

- Get to know the areas of application for the ASIS Software
- Understand the basic functioning of the ASIS Software
- Gain an overview of other resources, such as handbooks, which support the further use of the software

Access the software [here](#).



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### ASIS data input form

Enter the basic data to form to compare with the data from the ASIS program

**Official title of the program**

**Country**

**Sector**

Social engineering

Environment engineering

Technical engineering

### 1. About the software



The ASIS Evaluation Software (SW) is a program for evaluating program applications in the field of Social Innovation. This SW serves as a support tool in the evaluation of these applications by comparing the current application with ongoing or terminated programs in the field of Social Innovation. Thus, it provides a benchmark to evaluate in how far a proposal or planned project is in line with further successful programs.

One of the most important questions for public officials in evaluating proposals for funding is to judge if a specific program/project will be successful and there

with worth funding. Thus, the main goal of the software is to support decision makers in this process. For sure the software alone can never give a clear decision, but, together with risk evaluation tools and a more qualitative evaluation, it provides an innovative and potent decision support tool suitable for programs/projects on all levels, from small municipal projects to large programs on the level of the European Union or the national level.

The software is based on a client-server concept whereby the server side requires a web server and the client side a PC with a common web browser. No data is saved or transmitted. The software also does not use cookies.

Data protection is secured at any time, as the software does not offer any possibility to save data to avoid problems related to both data protection and security.

If the data is to be saved anyway, the option of printing in the form of a file – an option which all common web browsers offer - can be used. The storage and the associated data protection responsibility lies exclusively with the user.

## 2. Application and use



The software is free of charge and can be downloaded from the ASIS website as a Zip-File; alternatively, it can be used on the ASIS website directly. After installing the software, it can be used very easily and without additional training. Overall, there are two sides or forms that are relevant – the first site/window comprises the input form, the second site the output form/evaluation.

The first site comprises a couple of boxes where project related information – that usually comes from the application for funding or the business plan – has to be put in. There are either boxes to click (yes/no-information), qualitative information has to be chosen from a drop-down menu (e.g. on the country of the project/program), or numbers have to be entered. Information boxes beside each field explain which type of information has to be entered. Additionally, a handbook exists that explains the installing as well as the use of the software.

After all boxes are filled in, the virtual form can be submitted via clicking the respective bottom – after this, the evaluation page opens, displaying the results in graphs and figures. This output delivers useful information for the evaluation of proposals or business plans.

## 3. Interpretation of results



The evaluation page contains the evaluation of the entered program/project data. When you click on the arrow or on the word «Program information», a summary of the input data is displayed. This is followed by 7 diagrams, which display the evaluation results of the program to be evaluated (different diagrams related to different project dimensions, e.g. founders, financial issues, stakeholders etc.) compared to the data of existing and successful projects, gathered and analyzed by the ASIS project. Finally, a summary of the 7 indicators is displayed.



In all diagrams the green point indicates where the program evaluated is located, compared to successful Social Innovation projects in the EU. Thus, from the diagram it can be drawn if the respective program is comparable (measured with different indicators) to successful projects or not. This follows the analytical logic that whenever a proposal or business plan shows a large difference to existing and successful Social Innovation projects, further information and evaluation may be necessary, while “being in line” may give a hint for the future success of a proposal or business plan.

At the end of the evaluation page, a summary of the 7 indicators (from the different diagrams) is displayed. It is shown how many of the indicators are green, yellow or red – with green implying being in line with successful projects, yellow implying some difference, and red indicating for a large difference of the evaluated proposal or business plan compared to successful SI projects. Nonetheless, it has to be kept in mind that this “traffic light system” must not be interpreted as an indication of a “good” or “bad” rating per se. The statement of the colors only applies to “typical” or “atypical” with regard to the comparison programs, and gives a hint to the evaluator that further information and a closer examination is necessary.

**Ready to give it a try?  
Find the handbook in your language!**

<b>DE:</b>	<a href="https://socialinnovationstrategy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASIS_Evaluation_Handbook_de-1.pdf">socialinnovationstrategy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASIS_Evaluation_Handbook_de-1.pdf</a>
<b>EN:</b>	<a href="https://socialinnovationstrategy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASIS_Evaluation_Handbook_en.pdf">socialinnovationstrategy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASIS_Evaluation_Handbook_en.pdf</a>
<b>FR:</b>	<a href="https://socialinnovationstrategy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASIS_Evaluation_Handbook_fr.pdf">socialinnovationstrategy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASIS_Evaluation_Handbook_fr.pdf</a>
<b>IT:</b>	<a href="https://socialinnovationstrategy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASIS_Evaluation_Handbook_it.pdf">socialinnovationstrategy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASIS_Evaluation_Handbook_it.pdf</a>
<b>SL:</b>	<a href="https://socialinnovationstrategy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASIS_Evaluation_Handbook_sl.pdf">socialinnovationstrategy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ASIS_Evaluation_Handbook_sl.pdf</a>

# Conclusion

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This e-book, designed as a complementary tool to “Social Innovation Academies” held in 5 countries during the first trimester of the year 2021, gives an overview of the work done during 3 years by the ASIS partners on Social Innovation in the Alpine space.

After presenting our vision of innovation and the main challenges identified, we selected inspiring examples of local Social Innovations. We presented existing tools tested in the different regions to support Social Innovation and gave an overview of ASIS recommendations to implement new policies to better support SI in your territory. We made a focus on social impact measurement and our ASIS software to evaluate existing projects.

We invite you to refer to our online platform [socialinnovationstrategy.eu](https://socialinnovationstrategy.eu) and explore the deliverables and other outputs that were created within those 3 years in more detail. You will find online trainings and guidelines that cover a range of different aspects regarding SI, which will hopefully be able to provide you with new information and different perspectives beneficial for your daily work. Moreover, they are completely free of charge.

We hope we managed to convince you to become one of us, one of the Social Innovation ambassadors!

No matter the field of work you operate in or the organization you represent, there is a need for you in today's society. We need policy makers that will design and implement new policies that support Social Innovation in an effective and sustainable way. We need entrepreneurs that take this sustainability into account and recognize the advantages of collaboration and the potentials it holds. This is why we hope that the information, examples and tools presented in this book serve as useful addition to your knowledge and support you in your endeavors towards a more socially innovative society.

