

4 Building a SSE policy : areas of actions (end)

Through qualification of project leaders and players:

- ▶ Organizing trainings for employees and volunteers.
- ▶ Developing partnerships with universities.
- ▶ Supporting or creating support programs for the creation and the development of structures with a social utility.

Through a responsible public procurement:

- ▶ Introducing social and environmental clauses in public procurement and making sure that SSE players (that are often small entities) are able to respect them.

Through helping the structuring of players:

- ▶ Supporting the creation of shared accommodation spaces for the SSE players.
- ▶ Supporting the accommodation, support, or funding structures of the SSE enterprises.
- ▶ Helping the structuring of players and the development of sectors, especially with the support of regional and sectoral networks (housing, human services, waste, mobility, energy, etc).

Through direct involvement of local authorities:

- ▶ Integrating a SCIC (a co-operative company with collective interest), which is a French specific status that permits to include multiple actors to a society's capital: authorities, entrepreneurs, customers, employees, volunteers...

A participatory and cross-cutting approach :

The co-creation :

Since it carries specific practices and values, SSE has to be accompanied by a political will in harmony with its modes of action and its objectives. Co-creation approaches of SSE policies with stakeholders are consequently fundamental.

How ?

- ▶ Mobilizing SSE networks and players for the writing of the SSE development plan.
- ▶ Organizing consultation and co-creation spaces: SSE territorial meetings, monitoring committees, departmental committees of social economy...

A cross-cutting approach:

Since it creates jobs, SSE is often linked with the economic department, but this economy crosses the different public policies. It is important to raise awareness among elected representatives and officers regarding this cross-cutting approach and to set up work habits that answer to this approach.

How ?

- ▶ Informing and training representatives and officers of all departments.
- ▶ Pointing out an SSE delegate inside each department.
- ▶ Putting in place a cross-cutting organisation: punctually on projects, regularly with inter-services meetings, on a long term with steering committee.



Social and Solidarity Economy and local authorities in France

“Social and solidarity economy is an economic model in its own right, bringing answers to our territories’ needs”

– Common statement of french local authorities’ networks, March 2013.

RTES

RTES is a French network of 130 local authorities looking for a space for exchanges and a national coordination.

Creator of links, the network fosters relations between its members which are facing the same questions, difficulties or issues concerning the building or the implementation of SSE policies. Providing informations, it capitalizes the local authorities’ experiences, fosters their transfer, train and inform its adherents. Source of proposals, RTES makes its members’ voices heard to reinforce the support of SSE public policies at the local, national and European levels.

1 SSE in few words

• An economy with a long history but with today's values

The Social and Solidarity Economy enters into a long history. With the first workers' associations, consumers' and residents' co-operatives, or the first mutual insurance companies... social economy initiatives appeared from the 19th century. But its modes of action are still reflecting today's concerns. Financial, economic, social and environmental crises that the society is facing deeply transform our ways to do. Growing abstention and civic demotivation lead us to rethink the role of inhabitants, economic players and elected representatives. Symptoms of this change: the notions of sustainable development, collaborative economy, participatory democracy, social innovation and common goods irrigate speeches and fields of action.

• A pluralist and participatory economy

Since this economy combines economic development, fight against exclusion, environmental responsibility and citizen participation, SSE is more than ever able to address some of the major economic, environmental and social challenges. Based on rallying citizen mobilisation, it involves inhabitants, players and representatives for the development of a fairer and more united society.

The French SSE Law

Adopted at the end of July 2014, the French SSE Law aims at *"promoting the scaling up of SSE in all aspects, in order to build with SSE enterprises, a more robust, richer in terms of jobs, more sustainable and socially fairer growth strategy"*.

Moreover, the law also defines the SSE area and the social utility concept, contributes to the structuring, the recognition, the promotion and the funding of social economy, fosters social innovation and the takeover of companies by employees, recognizes the PTCE (Territorial Pole for Economic Cooperation) and the local currencies, securing associations' subsidies... All of these measures constitute major advances.

2 The key role of local authorities

• An economy that crosses all the public policies

In France, the beginning of a national policy in favour of social economy started through the creation of a Delegation for the Economy and Social Innovation in 1981 and through the creation of a State Secretariat dedicated to SSE between 2000 and 2002. Local authorities then took charge of the SSE development, inasmuch as it's an economy firstly anchored on territories. Indeed, by its fields of action and its values, SSE is an economy that crosses the general interest mission and the different public policies: economic development, childcare, transports, tourism, culture, innovation, research, housing...

Then territorial policies in favour of SSE developed at all levels. In 2012, the creation of a dedicated Ministry and a state Secretariat marked an important step for the recognition of SSE at the national scale, which materialized in July 2014 with the adoption of the SSE law.



• A strong commitment of local authorities in favour of SSE

In 2013, driven by RTES, the different networks of French local and regional authorities (which are represented at the European committee of the regions) have expressed their commitment in support of SSE through a joint declaration. Since this joint declaration, RTES and the various networks of local and regional authorities organize each year a national meeting of local authorities on SSE.

3 Why implementing a policy in favor of SSE ?

• To support the creation of non-relocatable jobs and companies

Social economy combines economic development and social aspirations, autonomy and solidarities. On the territories, this economy participates to a model of inclusive development creating non-relocatable jobs and producing social cohesion (for example by reintegrating through work people excluded from employment, by developing local services on territories...).

But SSE is also the first employer in rural areas and is one of the rare forms of private economy to be present in disadvantaged areas. In front of the crisis, social economy enterprises were more resilient (even though in France the associative employment begins to be weakened).

• To answer to inhabitants and enterprises' needs

Beyond its impact in terms of employment, SSE brings some answers to the unsatisfied needs of inhabitants and is an important factor of local attractiveness: for example, the presence of early childcare services, of cultural or sports associations is a fundamental element for the image of the territories.

• To foster innovation on territories

One of the dimension often unknown of the social economy is its economic and social innovation capacity: new services, new jobs, new forms of governance... SSE clears the way to new modes of action. Indeed, this economy was especially pioneer in the field of recycling channels (paper, textile, electronic waste...), in the production and distribution methods of a more environmentally friendly agriculture (organic farming, peasant agriculture, local distribution networks...), in the field of energy transition (struggle against energy insecurity, sustainable mobility...).

• To insure a social and territorial cohesion

Accessible and sustainable mobility, local services, associative and cultural activities, local economic development... through its activities, SSE contributes to rekindle the social tie and the territorial cohesion. These activities cross the issues of public policies led by local authorities: city policy, economic and social policy, cultural policy, urban planning policy... But on the rural and urban territories, SSE also stimulates the "living-together" and the fight against inequalities and all kinds of discrimination.

4 Building a SSE policy : areas of actions

Building an SSE policy requires a good understanding of its territory, its players, and its existing mechanisms but above all, requires time. Elected representatives are often facing the same questions and issues. Here are some possible lines of actions based on concrete examples set up by our member-communities.

• To know and make known

▶ Launching a territorial and shared diagnosis in order to establish forces, weaknesses, parameters and needs of the territory and imagine collective responses.

▶ Organizing meetings with and between territorial players to know each other and introduce cooperation (SSE breakfasts, thematic meetings...).

▶ Participating and promoting the presence of territorial players to events (month of SSE, employment forums...).

▶ Carrying out thematic guides, websites and publishing articles in institutional newspapers.

▶ Launching campaigns in favour of fair trade or solidarity finance...

• To support SSE players and help their structuring

Through direct aids:

▶ Opening legal aids to SSE players (for example by integrating social innovation to innovation support policies).

▶ Subsidizing SSE players for their general interest missions (specific centres for disabled people, young children, mobility, cultural action, integration through economic activity...).

▶ Launching calls for projects allowing the authority to precise the field of actions it wants to develop but leaving the project's initiative to the players.