



# What social enterprise means

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# Definitions

- **Social economy** is intended to make profits for people other than investors or owners; in other words, it aims to serve the members and not to obtain a return on investment as the traditional mainstream capital companies do. The social economy includes cooperatives, mutual societies, non-profit associations, foundations and social enterprises.
- The **European Commission** considers a **social enterprise** an operator in the social economy whose main objective is to have a social, societal or environmental impact rather than make a profit for the investors or owners.
- It operates by providing products and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative way and the profits are mainly reinvested to achieve social objectives.
- It is managed in an open and responsible manner, in accordance with the principle of solidarity and mutuality by involving employees, consumers and investors affected by its commercial activities.

# Social enterprise in Europe

- In Europe there are 2 million social economy enterprises, mostly micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), representing 10% of all businesses in the EU, more than 11 million people (about 6% of the EU's employees) work in these enterprises and up to 160 million people in Europe are members of social economy enterprises. Thus they have an essential role to the EU's employment, social cohesion, regional and rural development, environmental protection, consumer protection, agricultural, third countries development, and social security policies.
- Across Europe we can find different legal forms and a wide range of products and services. Many social enterprises operate in the form of social cooperatives, some are registered as private companies limited by guarantee, some are mutual, and many are non-profit-distributing organizations like provident societies, associations, voluntary organisations, charities or foundations.



# Despite their diversity, social enterprises mainly operate in the following fields:

- **Work integration** – training and integration of people with disabilities and unemployed people;
- **Personal social services** – health, well-being and medical care, professional training, education, health services, childcare services, services for elderly people, or aid for disadvantaged people;
- **Local development of disadvantaged areas** – social enterprises in remote rural areas, neighborhood development/rehabilitation schemes in urban areas, development aid and development cooperation with third countries;
- **Other** – including recycling, environmental protection, sports, arts, culture or historical preservation, science, research and innovation, consumer protection and amateur sports.



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# Thank you!

Ask questions:

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