The Social Economy Action Plan

Opportunities for rural business ecosystems and entrepreneurship?

Creating local value through entrepreneurship, services and territorial assets

Good Practice Webinar: Strengthening rural businesses for a more competitive Europe

17 September 2026

European Commission

SOCIAL ECONOMY ACTION PLAN

Defining social economy

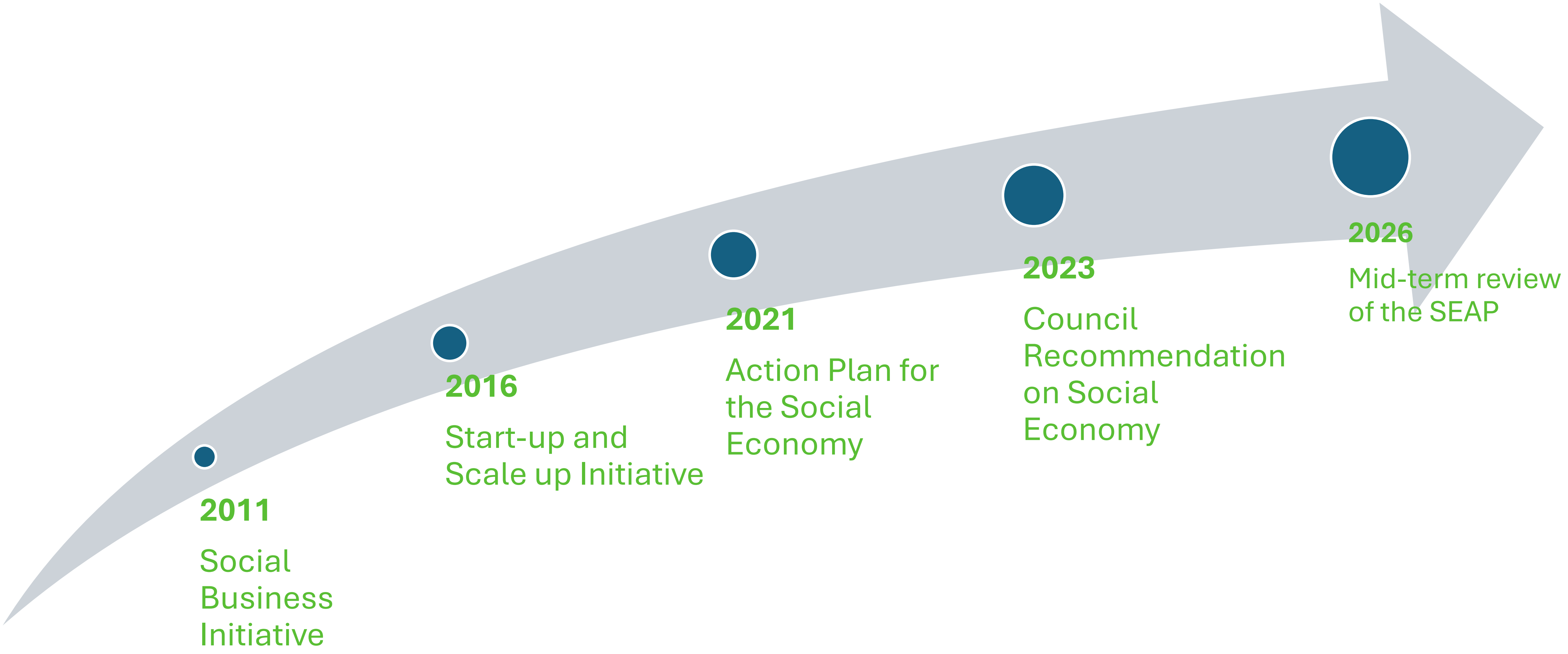
National heterogeneity

Organisation types: social enterprises, cooperatives, associations, mutual benefit societies and foundations

3 Key features

- Social or environmental goal
- Reinvestment of most of the profits and surpluses to carry out activities in the interest of members/users (“collective interest”) or society at large (“general interest”)
- Democratic and/or participatory governance

EU milestones



Last step: the mid-term review

Halfway point of the Social Economy Action Plan

New geopolitical context

Aims

- Take stock of what has been done
- What worked and what did not
- Set a direction for the coming years
- Additional new actions: From 63 to 89 actions

Monitoring the implementation of the Social Economy Action Plan

[Social Economy Action Plan Progress tracker]

European Commission

SOCIAL ECONOMY ACTION PLAN

Key action area 1:

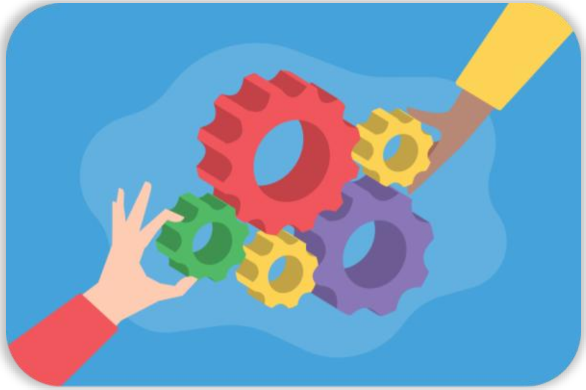
Strengthening multilevel governance and implementation on the ground

The Comission will:

- **Develop a toolkit to support regional and local policies.**
- **Promote the exchange of best practices across territories, especially in rural areas.**
- Publish a stocktaking report on the implementation of the Council recommendation in 2028.
- Provide training, skills development and support for social entrepreneurship, including in non-EU countries.

Key action area 2:

Making rules and frameworks work for the social economy



The Comission will:

- **Promote socially responsible public procurement and provide implementation guidance.**
- **Launch a call for proposals to scale up business-to-business partnerships and integrate social economy organisations into value chains.**
- **Review the General Block Exemption Regulation and clarify State aid rules.**
- Develop guidance for Member States on State aid measures for social support and investment.
- Continue promoting supportive legal frameworks (e.g. worker buy-outs, European Cooperative Society).
- Explore barriers faced by impact-driven businesses, including recognition and access to funding.
- Analyse national tax measures for the social economy (with the OECD).

Key action area 3:

Strengthening the social investment ecosystem

The Comission will:

- Explore a voluntary, market-led framework of investable objectives supported by outcome models and indicators (with the OECD).
- Assess the regulatory framework for venture and growth capital investors, including the review of the EuVECA regime.
- Prepare reports on financial intermediaries and on improving access to finance.
- Pilot an assessment of impact and outcomes at beneficiary level under InvestEU.
- Explore replicating innovative solutions to mobilise private capital and revise the European Code of Good Conduct for Microcredit Provision.

Key action area 4:

Scaling up skills, training & entrepreneurship

The Comission will:

- **Promote social and inclusive business incubation models** and support competence frameworks through mutual learning.
- Improve the knowledge base on social and inclusive entrepreneurship through studies (OECD).

Key action area 5:

Building the evidence base

The Comission will:

- Work towards a more systematic approach to data collection, including supporting social economy satellite accounts and national pilot projects.
- Expand the EU Social Economy Gateway to improve data sharing and transparency.
- Update the EU mapping of social enterprises.
- Publish a report with practical recommendations on data collection (GECES).