



## Context note

Most of the Member states face the same new economical and social challenges such as ageing population, growing inequalities, increasing number of people living in poverty and so on.

In this context, the European commission president, Manuel Barroso launched in 2009 a call to stimulate social innovation: “ *The financial and economical crisis has further increased the importance of creativity and innovation generally, and social innovation in particular, as an issue for sustainable growth, employment and reinforcement of competitiveness*”. Therefore, a new collective momentum was encouraged to think about new ways to promote social innovation at all level, at the benefit of our citizens.

*Social innovation should be defined as: definition, design and implementation of creative and innovation responses to social needs. In Europe, social innovation is supported by individuals, NGOs, public establishments, territorial authorities and so on.*

It seeks to provide concrete solutions to daily problems faced by citizens among them the elderly, families, persons in precarious situation and so on through the implementation of new forms of solidarity and exchanges, new partnerships or new services. These initiatives are a set of innovative actions, transferable, which can feed the reflection at the level of social policies implemented at local or European level and the partnerships to be developed.

The economic crisis, the new challenges faced by States and their territorial authorities, led the European commission to propose a European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth where social innovation has its whole place. The communication entitled “innovation union” provides a major role to the social dimension in innovation. *Many initiatives will appear at European level in the coming months.*

**This meeting will aim** at better understand the concept of social innovation, its realities, its outlines, its means, but also the transferability of experiments and the implementation of sustainable social policies.

Social innovation might be view through the approach of the fight against poverty and exclusion recognized by the European Commission as one of the privileged areas of innovation. It could also be considered in different forms of research and development, observation or also social action.

The path from innovation to social experimentation: good ideas ⇒ experimentation (test on an area or a specific target group) ⇒ transferability on other territories

### Documents

COM(2010) 546 final – Flagship 2020 – Innovation union

Position Paper ELISAN on the 2020 Strategy

Social innovation initiative [www.socialinnovationeurope.eu](http://www.socialinnovationeurope.eu)

Empowering people, driving change : social innovation in the European union

This is European social innovation – European commission ISBN 978-92-79-17075-1

Social experimentation : a methodological guide for policy makers