

# GAP ANALYSIS REPORT GREECE



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# 1. Designing future WELFARE systems – Social innovation in welfare (education)

## 1.1 Introduction and background

KEY STATISTICS			Established	Fragmented	In development	Nonexistent
Estimated number of SE's (year)	1,148 SE in 2019 (European Commission, 2019)	<b>Legal framework for SE's</b>		✓		
Estimated number of workers in SE's (year)	Not found	<b>Publicly funded measures for SE's</b>			✓	
Growth of SE's (years)	219% in 2013 (European Commission, 2019).	<b>Training and education</b>			✓	
		<b>Existence of SE networks</b>			✓	

Most social enterprises were established after **2011** as **Law 4019/2011** was approved that year. It was the first law on social economy and social entrepreneurship in Greece (European Commission, 2019). Greek law followed the EU operational definition of the concept of social enterprise based on three criteria; social, economic and inclusive governance (European Commission, 2020). This new law, which coincided with an intensification of the financial crisis, led to the multiplication of social enterprises in Greece (Varvarousis et al. 2018). Social innovation was necessary since the country was badly hit by the financial crisis. (European Commission, 2014).



**Law 4430/2016**, which replaced the former one recognises three different legal forms that define the country's Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) sector by default. Of these, only two fulfil the EU operational definition: social cooperative enterprises (SCEs) and limited liability social cooperatives (KoiSPEs). Most social enterprises operate within the food trade and processing, education, general trade, and leisure services (European Commission, 2019). Greek social enterprise ecosystem is still in its **infancy** compared with other European countries; but it could potentially flourish in the future. Social enterprises in Greece face **barriers in their growth** such as accessing appropriate finance, regulations/ administrative burdens, lack of a tradition of cooperation, poor commissioning and procurement from the public sector, lack of access to advice and business support and lack of appropriate business skills, among others (European Commission, 2019). Greece has still a long way to reach the social innovation expectations that have been set (European Commission, 2020).

Although, social enterprises in Greece **have a primary productive focus, rather than a welfare one**, there is a clear social dimension in their actual operation (Varvarousis et al., 2017). According to Adam (2016), among the 632 SCEs registered on the NRSSE (former General Registry of Social Economy) until 2014, only **105** had a **welfare** role.

The total number of social enterprises was 1,148 in 2019 and including: 984 SCEs, 8 Civil cooperatives, 3 Limited liability companies, 100 women's agrotourism cooperatives and 1 agricultural cooperative. The annual growth rate in **2013** reached **219%** compared with **2012**. These numbers reveal the phenomenon's dynamism in Greece (European Commission, 2019). There is an **uneven spread** of social enterprises in Greece (Attica: 44%; Central Macedonia: 13%; Thessaly: 8%) (General Secretariat of SSE, 2018).



## 1.2 Ecosystem

Areas of activity	Actors
Governmental departments/institutions	Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity Ministry of Interior Ministry of Economy and Development Ministry of Health Ministry of Rural Development and Food Special Secretariat of Social Solidarity Economy General Register of SSE organisations Networking Platform for SSE organisations General Secretary for Trade and Consumer Protection Delphi Plus Development Agency of Karditsa (ANKA SA) LoutrakiPLUS Orthodox Church
Authorities designing and enforcing social innovation in the welfare domain, Authorities designing and enforcing legal, fiscal and regulatory frameworks	Ministry of Economy and Development Ministry of Interior Ministry of Justice Ministry of Administrative Reconstruction Independent Public Procurement Authority (EAADHSY) Preliminary References Examination Authority (AEPP) Court of Audit DIAVGEIA of Law 3861/2010 Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity Ministry of Rural Development and Food Ministry of Health Greek Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED) General Secretary for Trade and Consumer Protection Regional Administrations Municipalities
Institutions and initiatives promoting social enterprise education and training Observatories and entities monitoring the development of social enterprises and assessing their needs and opportunities	Hellenic Open University – MSc in Social Solidarity Economy Agricultural University of Athens – Agricultural Policy and Cooperatives Lab University of Patras – Department of Business - Administration in Missolonghi Lifelong Learning Center (LLC)/Athens University of Economics and Business - programme on 'Social Entrepreneurship' The People's University of Social Solidarity Economy Social Economy Institute P2P Lab Heinrich Böll Research Foundation British Council SSE Education Platform Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity Special Secretariat of Social Solidarity Economy Higgs, Impact Hub Athens,



	University of Piraeus, Social Innovation Academy
Incubators	Athens Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ACEin) Athens Startup Business Incubator (ThEA) Attica Business Innovation Center Centre 'ERGANI' Higgs Impact Hub Greece INNOVATHENS Militos Consulting S.A. Orange Grove Social Dynamo – Bodossaki Foundation Solidarity Mission Athens Makerspace Blue Growth, Metavallon, Corallia
Facilitators of learning and exchange platforms	National Observatory of Civil Society Organisations Social Solidarity & Regional Development Network (KAPA network) Coordination of KoinSEp Hellenic Federation of Social Cooperatives with Limited Liability Regional Mechanism of Social Cooperative Enterprises of Attica Social Cooperative Enterprises Network of Western Macedonia Social Cooperative Enterprises Network of Central Macedonia Social Cooperative Enterprises Network of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace Social Entrepreneurship Forum
Organisers of social enterprises networks, associations and pacts that engage in advocacy and mutual learning and in facilitating joint action	Impact Hub CSR Hellas
Financial intermediaries (social-impact investors or funds, philanthropic investors or funds, crowdfunding platforms, etc.) for social enterprises and support infrastructure	Co-operative Bank of Karditsa Pancretan Cooperative Bank Act for Greece/National Bank of Greece Caritas Hellas Impact Hub Greece Action Finance Initiative The People's Trust Praksis: One Up Crowd-funding and Business Coaching Centre Bodossaki Foundation Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) Latsis Foundation Tima Foundation



## 1.3 Gaps

### In the public sector

Lack of public sector policies and strategies for facilitating social innovation in the welfare domain. Lack of providing welfare services by public actors (European Commission, 2020)

Lack of support and procurement from the public sector (European Commission 2019)

### In the non/social profit sector

Lack of non/social profit companies with an exclusive welfare role. Gap between the supply of and the demand of social services (European Commission, 2020).

Lack of skills and capacity in how to start up and run a social enterprise (OECD, 2021)

### In education

Lack of training opportunities in social innovation, entrepreneurship and social and solidarity economy from a welfare perspective.

Gap in the open science and open data because of the weak academic digital infrastructure (OECD, 2021).

Most social enterprises in Greece do not have a clear welfare focus (Varvarousis et al., 2017). There is an important gap in social innovation in the welfare domain both at the public and non/social profit sector. The public sector lacks policies and strategies for facilitating social innovation in the welfare domain, while the non/social sector lacks initiatives that have an exclusive welfare focus. Regarding education, even though there are some available training programs and individual courses in business-oriented degrees in social innovation, entrepreneurship and social and solidarity economy, a wider variety of programs could be offered; higher education institutions and centres of continuing education and life-long learning should consider of offering a greater variety of seminars, training program, and/or





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degree programs that specialize on different aspects of social innovation and probably include a course or learning unit on social innovation in the welfare domain.

## 1.4 Challenges





### Toward students higher education (social profiles)

Students' and graduates' of non-business university degrees lack entrepreneurial skills and knowledge. Entrepreneurial skills are not integrated in non-business bachelor's degrees' courses and/or modules.

Need to increase the limited entrepreneurship-related courses (OECD, 2021).

Need to organize entrepreneurship and student innovation

### Toward professionals working in the welfare domain

Lack of access to advice and business support, lack of appropriate business skills, and lack of tradition of cooperation.

Need to create bottom-up development procedures aiming to encourage the creation of new social enterprises in urban and remote areas (European Commission, 2020)

### Toward social organisations (public, non-profit, social profit)

Lack of financing, regulations and administrative burdens, and poor commissioning and procurement from the public sector.

Need to make social organisations aware of vital elements such as sustainability and social impact (Civil act, 2019)

Need to deal with the inconsistency that the Greek legal framework of social entrepreneurship and social enterprises to the definition of the European Commission (Katarachia, 2018)

It was not possible to find challenges exclusively related to the welfare domain. However, a lot of challenges were found in the field of social innovation in Greece in



general. Organizations and professionals face a wide range of difficulties such as accessing appropriate finance, regulations/ administrative burdens, lack of a tradition of cooperation, poor commissioning and procurement from the public sector, lack of access to advice and business support and lack of appropriate business skills, among others (European Commission, 2019). In terms of higher education, university students and graduates lack entrepreneurial skills while the non-business university degrees rarely offer courses or modules in entrepreneurship, social innovation, and social and solidarity economy. For example, degrees that are not traditionally related to business as the Bachelor's in Education, could offer compulsory or elective courses in entrepreneurship, social innovation, and social and solidarity economy, broadening in this way students' horizons, giving them employment alternatives, and empowering them to dive into the business and innovation field.



## 2. Good practice in higher education – Master’s Program in Social and Solidarity Economy



All images courtesy of Social and Solidarity Economy ([eap.gr](http://eap.gr)).

### Key findings

- This is the first master’s program in Social and Solidarity Economy offered in Greece.
- There is a welfare perspective in some of the courses offered.
- The master’s program follows an interdisciplinary approach.
- It combines theoretical and practical knowledge.

### 2.1 Introduction, challenges and background

The Hellenic Open University offers a two-year MSc e-learning program (120 ECTS) on Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE). Even though there are also some short duration training programs and courses in social innovation and social and solidarity economy in Greece, this is the only program offered as a master’s degree. The Postgraduate Program "Social and Solidarity Economy" has an interdisciplinary character combining different areas of social sciences and more specifically of Economics, Sociology, Political Science, Legal Science, Geography and Psychology. It aims at providing both theoretical and practical knowledge to the participants.



This MSc program comes to fill in the gap of higher education in social innovation, social enterprises and social and solidarity economy and provides the participants with some key knowledge and skills. For example, it familiarizes the participants with the content, the history, and the foundations of social and solidarity economy (SSE). By the end of this program participants will be able to develop and coordinate operation and management strategies at SSE enterprises.

This Master's Program is offered to students and professionals who hold a bachelor's degree in social sciences by the Open Hellenic University.

- The following courses of the master's program, have a welfare perspective: Public Policies and Institutional Framework for Social and Solidarity Economy (this course includes instruction in welfare and solidarity policies)
- Concepts and Theories of Social and Solidarity Economy (theoretical course that includes instruction in the foundations of SSE)
- Organizational Forms and Types of Social and Solidarity Economy (theoretical course that instructs participants in the types of SSE enterprises).

## 2.2 Proposed solutions and recommendations

The curriculum of this master's program could be useful in the development of the Welfare curriculum (including modules, descriptors and teaching, methodologies) for social innovation and entrepreneurship training. The course outline, description and teaching methodologies could work as a base for the Welfare curriculum.

The curriculum of this master's program is interdisciplinary as it includes courses in different study areas as Economics, Sociology, Political Science, Legal Science, Geography and Psychology and accepts students with background in different disciplines of social sciences. In this master's program SSE enterprises are explored from different perspectives; SSE enterprises are viewed as a means to address environmental and social needs and facilitate access to common goods. Also, the master's program includes a course with a political perspective, offering instruction in the political settings, social movements, forms of power and policies in Greece. In addition, there are courses in entrepreneurship, innovation, marketing, administration, team dynamics, processes of democratic governance, human resources management, financing, and research. The future Welfare curriculum could include instruction in the above-mentioned fields.



## 2.3 Concluding remarks – Lessons learned, inspiration for future curriculum

- Introduce an interdisciplinary approach.
- Invite/accept participants from different backgrounds.
- Combine theory with practice.
- Follow an experiential and participatory teaching approach.



### 3. Good practice in the public sector – Entrepreneurship Program – Municipality of Aigaleo



All images courtesy of [Municipality of Aigaleo](#)

#### Key findings

- This is an entrepreneurship program launched by a municipality in Athens.
- This program is very practical as it guides participants throughout the establishment of their own business.

#### 3.1 Introduction, challenges and background

This Entrepreneurship Program is held by the municipality of Aigaleo ; that is a suburban municipality in the western part of Athens. The program started running in May 2022 and it is free of charge. The aim of the program is to provide training and mentoring guidance to the beneficiaries who wish to establish their own company. Through this initiative, beneficiaries will receive specialized training on how to start a business, they will design a business plan, implement it with the guidance of mentors and consultants, design the marketing plan and branding and search funding opportunities. Towards the end of the program the participants will receive tailor-made support in establishing the company, financing, and networking. In more detail, the training program consists of 3 stages:

**Stage 1:** Entrepreneurship & Innovation Seminars – preparation of a Business Plan (80 hours over a period of 4 weeks) During this stage, the beneficiaries will attend a series of specialized business seminars, with the aim of learning about important business issues and strengthening their knowledge and skills in critical areas, related to the development of their business activity, as well as how preparation of a business plan (business plan) of their business idea. The seminars will be based on the beneficiaries' needs.



**Stage 2:** Maturation – implementation of Business Plans – Personalized Coaching (120 hours over a period of 10 weeks). During this stage, the beneficiaries, with the support and guidance of the mentors, advisors and management staff of the pre-incubator, will work on their own business plan, marketing plan, identity / communication (branding) and will explore the financing issues and networking their product / business idea development.

**Stage 3:** Completion of warm-up – graduation (40 hours over 4 weeks). During this stage, the beneficiaries will be supported in matters of establishing, financing, networking their business and starting their business activity.

Even though early-stage entrepreneurial activity in Greece has improved, Greece still has a poor business friendly environment. There is a need for policies that will encourage and support entrepreneurship in the country (Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research, 2019). This initiative could boost entrepreneurial activity in the municipality of Aigaleo.

The municipality of Aigaleo is responsible for the program, however, no information on trainers/mentors is provided. The eligibility criteria for the participants are the following: students or recent graduates who are older than 18 years old and have the right to legally work in Greece and people who recently established start-ups.

This initiative will benefit on the long run the municipality of Aigaleo as it will create employment opportunities for the younger generation.

### 3.2 Proposed solutions and recommendations

The present initiative proposes a very interesting approach to supporting people who wish to become entrepreneurs. It offers them practical training in very important aspects of entrepreneurial activity (funding, business plan, marketing plan, branding, networking etc.), while it also provides them with mentoring, consulting, and administrative help. Holding a practical training in entrepreneurship that gives purposeful and meaningful support to the participants, will help create companies that have a higher impact on the local and regional community. The content and structure of this entrepreneurship program should be replicated in future training programs.





### 3.3 Concluding remarks – Lessons learned, inspiration for future curriculum

- Offering mentoring services for the establishment of a company.
- Areas to be included in the training curriculum: searching funding opportunities, designing a business plan, marketing plan and branding.
- Administrative help in establishing a business.



## 4. Good practice in non/social profit – People's University of Social Solidarity Economy



All images courtesy of UnivSSE

### Key findings

- People's University of Social Solidarity Economy (UnivSSE) is a social non-profit cooperative.
- UnivSSE holds free of charge activities: vocational training programs, seminar, lectures, discussions, radio broadcasts and publications of books on SSE.
- It has an archive of free access bibliographic material, audio-visual material, and publications.
- UnivSSE tackles youth unemployment and addresses the gap in SSE education.

### 4.1 Introduction, challenges and background

The People's University of Social Solidarity Economy (UnivSSE) is a social non-profit cooperative, established in Thessaloniki, Greece. The aim of the Cooperative is to provide education, training, information, popularization, research, studies, programs, publications, support services, development of educational and social networks in the fields of social and solidarity economy (SSE), self-governance, direct democracy, commons, aiming at collective and social benefits and social innovation.

UnivSSE Coop provides life-long training opportunities in different fields, supporting in this way youth employment. In addition, UnivSSE Coop addresses the gap in SSE education, by organizing seminars and lectures for the local community.



The activities of UnivSSE Coop are addressed to people involved in social solidarity economy collectives, but also to any interested citizen. Therefore, the whole local community can benefit by UnivSSE Coop activities. The stakeholders include entrepreneurs, professionals in the field of SSE and other fields, and university professors. The UnivSSE Coop belongs to a strong network of Universities, Research Centres and Local Authorities.

The activities of UnivSSE include vocational training programs, seminar, lectures, discussions, radio broadcasts and publications of books on SSE. Among the activities of UnivSSE, vocational training programs are offered to the unemployed youth from 18 to 29 years for free. The vocational training programs are in different fields including project management, social media, digital tools, organic agriculture, Greek language for refugees, social enterprise establishment, among others. The activities of UnivSSE are free of charge. Apart from these activities UnivSSE has an archive of free access bibliographic material, audiovisual material, and informative publications.

This initiative benefits the unemployed youth of Thessaloniki as it offers opportunities for vocational training. Also, it benefits everyone who wants to learn more about SSE and its subdivision (including welfare systems).

## 4.2 Proposed solutions and recommendations

The educational methodology of the UnivSSE could be used in future training programs. The educational methodology is based on the principles of adult learning. The teaching methodologies include linking ideas to action, student-centred learning, learning by discovery, critical thinking, and a two-way interaction between teacher – student. These teaching methodologies could be very useful when building the Welfare curriculum and training program. In addition, the UnivSSE provides a free access to recordings of lectures and radio broadcasts and publications. In line with this, the Welfare project could provide free video lectures, free notes, assignments, and solutions not only to the training participants but also to the general public after the completion of the program.

## 4.3 Concluding remarks – Lessons learned, inspiration for future curriculum

Educational methodology (student-centred learning, learning by discovery, critical thinking).

Free access of audio-visual material (recording of lectures and radio broadcasts) and publications.



## 5. Summary focus group interview

Each project partner/country selected 8-10 stakeholders (total of approximately 40 stakeholders) to be involved in national focus groups with 3 objectives in mind:

- 1) Exploring challenges that social entrepreneurs of different backgrounds are currently facing, in order to validate or adjust the gap analysis.
- 2) Discussing skills and competences that students, educators, researchers and practitioners in the social field lack in regard to social innovation and social entrepreneurship. Doing so we can better identify building blocks and relevant content for the curriculum to be designed.
- 3) Identifying stakeholders that want to participate in (co-)designing and/or reviewing the curriculum/training platform.

### 5.1 Data

- Date of the interview: 06/10/2022
- The interview was conducted online.
- 8 respondents participated, among which 1 students, 2 researchers in social science, 5 practitioners in social innovation/entrepreneurship.

### 5.2 Main findings

#### 5.2.1 What social innovation/entrepreneurship stands for

- the **centre** of social economy is the human
- there is **not a generally accepted** definition of social innovation/ entrepreneurship
- there is an important **distinction** between social innovation in the context of entrepreneurship and social economy.
- all definitions of social innovation have one thing in common: **citizens' engagement/ active participation.**



### 5.2.2 Success factors identified

- **Network** (6 participants)
- **Education** (5 participants)
- **Financial Framework** (5 participants)
- **Legal Framework** (4 participants)

### 5.2.3 Barriers identified

In Greece there are important gaps in the financial (7 participants) and legal framework (6 participants).

- There is not a common legal and financial framework for different types of social enterprises.
- The legal framework does not allow the cooperation of different social enterprises.
- Lack of funding.
- Lack of information and guidance from public (e.g., tax services) and private services (e.g., accountants).

More barriers mentioned: lack of education in the field of social economy, bureaucracy, fragmentation of the field of social economy, buck-passing/avoiding responsibility, lack of a common vision shared by public authorities.

### 5.2.4 Skills and competences needed for social innovation/entrepreneurship

Students need to develop their **skills** including: collaboration skills, communication skills, organizational skills, confidence, empathy and conflict resolution, creativity, critical thinking, thinking of innovative ideas, determination and decisiveness, citizenship skills and civic responsibility.

Educators should receive training in **psychology**, to help their students develop their collaboration skills (including assigning and managing roles in a team).



### 5.3 Concluding remarks

In Greece there are important gaps in the **legal, financial, and educational framework**. There is **a lack of soft and entrepreneurial skills** across all educational levels. **School curricula** mostly focus on traditional entrepreneurial models rather than social economy. **Network** is viewed as the most important element that can make a project in social innovation thrive. There are several **family enterprises** in Greece that present characteristics of social enterprises in their operation.

The participants proposed that Welfare project needs to invest in **young entrepreneurs' and students' education**; it needs to help them develop their skills and familiarize them with the social economy model. The Welfare project should support people interested in founding a social enterprise to establish professional **networks**. The Welfare project could provide **training to these family enterprises** and guide them on how adopt the model of social innovation and entrepreneurship.



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

