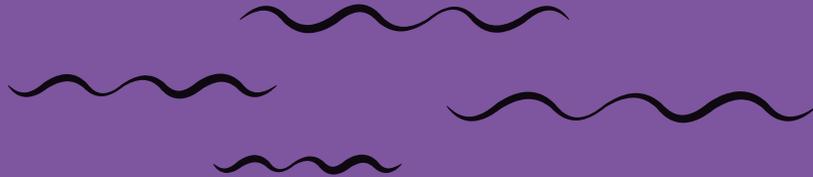


Social Economy and Social Responsibility in the Private Sector



Atlantic Social Lab

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Social Economy and Social Responsibility

The social economy promotes civic participation and engagement as well as socially inclusive entrepreneurship, thus embracing a series of different activities capable of providing opportunities for individuals and their communities to get engaged and add value to their own wellbeing. It usually encompasses different types of organisations and collective legal forms that operate in the solidarity sector, such as associations, cooperatives, foundations or mutual societies, social enterprises, etc, that provide assistance to groups of people such as unemployed, NEETs, disabled, children and youths, as well as elders, poor and vulnerable groups.

Social corporate responsibility grew in popularity for the same reasons of social innovation: both address new forms of dealing with issues that concern society and challenge the old assumptions and solutions towards social problems, as well as what roles organisations should play.

Strengthening Social Enterprises in Cork

Cork's City Council's pilot action aims at developing and strengthening the relationship between social enterprises, local government and private sector in Cork. To achieve this, workshops and



training events were held, intended to provide information for social enterprises and promote networking and learning about the challenges faced by these organisations in the city. In fact, the events put considerable effort into learning and sharing activities in an attempt to develop bonds between organisations, hoping that the shared knowledge and strengthened relations would lead to an overall improvement of the sector.

Developing New Industries in Bretagne

The pilot action developed by the Regional Social and Solidary Economy Chamber (CRESS) consisted in improving the business model of reuse and recycling centres in order to foster circular economy in the region. With this social innovation initiative, CRESS intends to create a Social and Solidarity Economy recycling industry in the region so to solve the employment needs of the region and further improve

the recycling and reuse processes, thus strengthening the green and inclusive economy.

The pilot action aims at identifying participants with similar projects so that synergies can be created and cooperation can be promoted. This should result in the consolidation of a modern recycling industry that follows green and inclusive economic principles and positively contributes to the region of Bretagne.



Conclusion

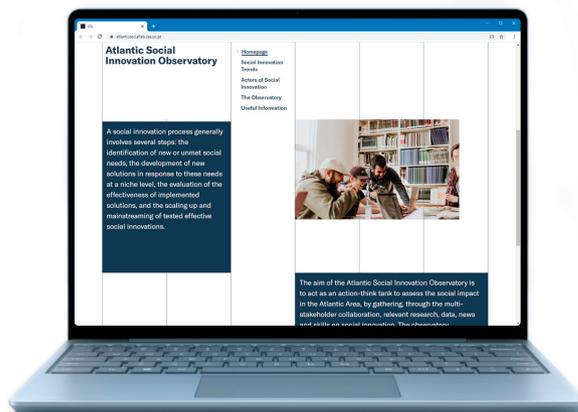
As welfare states continue to struggle with the provision of social services, the social economy becomes more important and even local enterprises and other private for-profit organisations are expected to pay more attention to the creation of social value in their territory and promote the wellbeing of its citizens.

Yet social corporate responsibility often fails to meet the expectations of policy makers, either because they are affected by the same crisis that impacts the public sector or because the notion of private

institutions using their profits for the benefit of society is still not universally accepted. As time moves on, new legislation and cooperation initiatives are needed to promote social responsibility in the private sector and bring awareness about the idea behind it.

The Atlantic Social Innovation Observatory

The Atlantic Social Innovation Observatory is a monitoring tool that aims to act as an action-think tank, gathering relevant research, data, news and skills on social innovation. The observatory is developed and implemented by the **Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra** (Portugal) in the context of the Atlantic Social Lab project.



Partners

