

## CASCAIS DECLARATION

### **For a European Action Plan for Social Economy promoting the role of the social economy in the European Pillar of Social Rights**

Following on the previous presidencies of the Monitoring Committee of Luxembourg Declaration, securing the reinforcement of social economy in EU policies, with particular emphasis on contributing to the creation and maintenance of decent jobs, the representatives of the signatory governments adopt this Declaration presented at the Monitoring Committee meeting, held in Cascais, on July 13, 2021.

Recognizing that the damage caused by the COVID19 pandemic - with a profound impact on public health, and strong ripples in the economies and societies of our countries and across the EU, as well as the uncertainty it causes in all areas of life in our communities - makes the role of social economy more relevant in tackling the social crisis and promoting social, economic and territorial cohesion.

Recognizing that social economy, within the diversity of entities that it comprises, impregnated by the common values of cooperation, democracy and solidarity, contributes to achieving, in partnership with the public and traditional private business sector, more agile and proximity responses, to the effects of COVID19 in crucial areas of economic activity and in community social action, but also offering innovative solutions for just green and digital transition and playing a key role in strengthening Europe's industry and resilience through collective entrepreneurship.

Recognizing that social economy is a top-level business and social reality in the EU, present in all sectors of economic activity, with 2.8 million companies and entities, generating 8% of GDP, representing 13.6 million jobs, sharing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals with emphasis on goal 8: "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all".

Considering the recommendations of the Luxembourg declaration, "A roadmap to a more complete ecosystem for social economy companies", of 4 December 2015; the Bratislava Declaration, "The Social Economy as a key player in providing effective answers to current

social challenges in the EU and the World”, of 1 December 2016; the Declaration of Ljubljana, “Expansion of social economy enterprises in the social and solidarity economy: towards a more solid and structured cooperation between the EU and Southeast Europe” of 25 April 2017; the Madrid Declaration, “The social economy, a business model for the future of the EU”, of 23 May 2017; the “Pact for Impact” Manifesto of Paris, 11 July 2019; and the Declaration of Toledo “The Social and Solidarity Economy as a key driver for an inclusive and sustainable future”, of 4 December 2020.

Recognizing the relevance of the contribution of social economy to the “European Pillar of Social Rights”, signed jointly by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, on 17 November 2017, at the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth that took place in Gothenburg, Sweden, whose Action Plan to implement the 20 principles set out in the European Pillar of Social Rights was presented in May 2021 under the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of EU.

Recalling that the social economy is identified in the 2021 Annual Single Market Report as part of an industrial ecosystem, in the context of the update of 2020 EU industrial strategy and its priorities to accelerate the twin green and digital transitions and strengthen resilience and social cohesion.

Considering the Porto Declaration of 8 May 2021, which underlines the importance of closely following and monitoring the implementation of the major goals of the European Pillar of Social Rights for 2030.

Gathered in Cascais, on July 13, 2021, we decided to adopt the following principles and recommendations:

- Reinforce the commitment to the guidelines formulated in the Declarations of Luxembourg, Bratislava, Ljubljana, Madrid, in the Manifesto “Pact for Impact” of Paris, in the Declaration of Toledo, assuming a common understanding of the values and principles of the Social Economy affirmed therein; and give due attention to the measures recommended in the Mannheim Declaration on Social Economy released at the European Summit on Social Economy on 27 May.

- Recommend to the EU and Member States the reinforcement of the commitment to social economy entities as instruments of resilience in the context of the economic and social crisis caused by COVID19, including them in European Financing Instruments and in national Recovery and Resilience Plans, in particular, with regard to the maintenance and creation of stable, decent and quality jobs;
- Improve access to public and private financing for social economy entities, taking into account their specificities. At public level, in addition to specific programs for the social economy - at European, national and regional level - special attention should be given to the use of social criteria in public procurement, to the development of relational models with social economy bodies inspired by principle of solidarity and based on collaboration in the planning, design and execution of services and interventions aimed at raising the levels of social cohesion and protection and at recognizing the specificities of social economy entities in terms of State Aid. Special attention should also be given to the potential of social economy in order to achieve the emission reduction targets. At the private level, the development of intermediaries and investors with the capacity to understand the particular needs of these entities, including in the area of microcredit, ethical and cooperative finance, mutualistic funds and social impact bonds is particularly relevant. Priority should also be given to developing solutions that combine the public, private and social economy sectors;
- Support the European Action Plan for the Social Economy, to be launched by the EU in the second half of 2021, with the aim of supporting existing social economy entities and social enterprises, as well as the creation of new entities, innovation and social investment, reinforcing the role of the social economy in the European Pillar of Social Rights and in boosting the Green and Digital Transitions;
- Welcome the 'Proximity, Social Economy and Civil Security' industrial ecosystem, and reaffirm the role of public and private stakeholders, including social partners, to co-create the Transition Pathway for the green and digital transition and for strengthening resilience of social economy actors and enterprises in the single market;
- Reinforce the commitment to the creation of instruments aimed at training and empowering social economy entities, through the involvement of its actors in the design and implementation of the Skills Agenda for Europe, in particular via the "Pact for Skills. Such new instruments will take into account social economy specificities, namely its role in integration of individuals at risk of social exclusion and the relevance of innovation, social

entrepreneurship and volunteering in shaping appropriate responses to new social challenges. It is also essential to improve the management capacity of these entities, namely in terms of digitization and for the purposes of access to finance;

-Strengthen the cooperation among Members States engaged in the promotion of the social economy by setting a biannual Work Plan of the Monitoring Committee of Luxembourg Declaration in cooperation with Civil Society where appropriate.

- Invite public stakeholders at different level of governance to strengthen regional/local networks of social economy actors in order to foster economic growth and social inclusion policies in territories;

- Recommend the structuring, within the scope of the EU and by mobilising the Erasmus Plus programme, of a coherent policy on education for the social economy in the curricula of all levels of education, including awareness-raising actions, professional training, exchanges between organizations and transnational cooperation, promoting from the first cycle of education, among children and young people, knowledge and participation in organizations founded by people, for the satisfaction of people's needs and interests, predominantly pursuing the common good;

- Strengthen the promotion of cooperation between academia, research centres, statistical institutes and social economy entities and companies for the creation, establishment and dissemination of methodologies, good practice networks and statistical tools, including social economy satellite accounts, as well as studies and instruments for measuring social impact.

Cascais, July 13, 2021