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Inputs of the Coalition for Solidarity Economy Development within the framework of consultations for the establishment of the new Pre-accession Instrument (IPA III) for the period 2021/27

Social and solidarity economy should be tackled within Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth

European Economic and Social Committee defines social enterprises as entities providing social services and/or goods and services to vulnerable persons and entities with a method of production of goods or services with a social objective. The models vary based on national context:

- Social economy = associations, cooperatives and foundations
- New legal forms emerging – but sharing same principles, balancing social and economic
- Social enterprise active across sectors from work integration (WISE) to providing social and welfare services across sectors.

Social entrepreneurship is a kind of entrepreneurship whose major aim is to create social value, i.e. large-scale benefits for society that can be seen as positive externalities not (yet) taken into account by society or government. Everyone seems to agree on the fact that social entrepreneurs identify opportunities to solve new social problems, by providing new ideas, new types of services, by searching for more efficient – or new – combinations of resources.

The legal forms within which social enterprises in Serbia operate are: cooperatives, enterprises for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, associations, foundations, limited liability companies and regional agencies. This means that there is no unique law that regulates the working framework of social entrepreneurship, nor there is a unique strategy that would set activities and measures for the development of the sector in Serbia. The absence of law on social entrepreneurship, however, doesn't mean that social enterprises cannot operate in practice. During last 10 years sector developed on its own proving that there is a way to create value, economic growth and provide a solution to numerous social and environmental issues on local level and wider. Taking into consideration Governmental Plan for 2020, Law on Social Entrepreneurship will be adopted by the end of this year. Support to all actors in the sector should be planned accordingly.

Support to social economy in Serbia should be two-fold, comprised of measures to support social businesses and networks and umbrella organisations active in the sector.

Direct support to social enterprises through:

- Creating and implementing buy social campaigns;
- Support to SE capacities: legal support in establishing and monitoring changes in terms of the new Law in order to bring the situation in the sector as quickly as possible with the provisions of the new Law, name change, registration and the like;
- Flexible grants to support SEs for market expansion, listing, entry into new markets, promotion and support of exports, and similar;
- Capacity support - consultancy support for development and dissemination;
- Grants for fixed and current assets;
- Grants for implementation of various projects / thematic: rural development, women's entrepreneurship, circular economy, local service development, support to CSOs for social service providers, etc;

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Support for networks / clusters / regional and other associated initiatives through:

- Grants / projects to promote and increase the visibility;
- Grants / projects for capacity building in terms of networking in WB and in European Union;
- Strengthening the ecosystems for the development of a solidarity economy by working with national and local actors, businesses, monitoring and measuring social impact, etc.;
- Involving high school students and relevant higher education institutions;
- Working with local governments (public procurement, local support, etc.).