

Training contents SSOLEIL project. SECTION 5

Local and Solidarity Economy Tools for the Local Level



**Cofinanciado por
la Unión Europea**

Section 5: Legislative Context of the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE)

5.1 The SSE Regulatory Framework in Spain

The Social and Solidarity Economy in Spain has a consolidated regulatory framework that gives it legal recognition and institutional support. [Law 5/2011 on the Social Economy](#) is the main reference in this area, establishing principles and criteria for entities operating under this model, including cooperatives, labour societies, mutual funds and other forms of economic organization for social purposes.

5.1.1 Social Economy Law 5/2011

Law 5/2011 constitutes the central axis of the development of SSE in Spain. Among its most important provisions are:

- **Official recognition** of the SSE as an economic sector with its own characteristics.
- **Clear definition** of entities that are part of the SSE ecosystem.
- **Promotion of access to finance and credit**, facilitating the sustainability of SSE entities.
- **Implementation of tax incentives and specific support programmes** to strengthen the sector.

5.1.2 Regional Laws

Due to the decentralized structure of the Spanish State, several autonomous communities have developed their own regulations to strengthen the SSE in their territories. Examples of this include:

- **Catalan Cooperatives Law**, which promotes inter-cooperation and financing adapted to SSE entities.
- **Regulation in the Valencian Community**, which gives priority to public procurement with SSE entities.
- **Social Economy Strategy of Navarra**, focused on the inclusion of SSE in regional development policies.

5.1.3 Impact of National Policies

The recognition and institutional strengthening of SSE in Spain has allowed a significant expansion of its presence in various economic and social sectors. The implementation of national policies has facilitated the access of SSE entities to new financing opportunities, facilitating their consolidation and growth.

One of the main impacts of these policies has been an **increase in the generation of stable and quality employment**. SSE entities have proven to be more resilient in times of economic crisis, as they prioritize job stability and the equitable distribution of resources. Currently, the sector represents approximately **10% of the national GDP** and employs more than **2 million people**, consolidating as a key actor in the Spanish economy.

In addition, institutional support has enabled the SSE to **strengthen its access to funding**, both at state level and through European funds. Programmes such as the **ERDF fund** and **EaSI programme (Employment and Social Innovation)** have facilitated investment in social economy projects, encouraging the creation of new entrepreneurial initiatives with positive social and environmental impact.

Another important development has been the **integration of SSE in public procurement**, promoting its participation in tenders from local and autonomous authorities. The introduction of social and environmental clauses in public procurement has made it possible for cooperatives, integration firms and other SSE entities to enter into contracts with administrations; Contributing to the strengthening of the local economic fabric and the generation of inclusive employment.

Finally, national policies have encouraged **inter-cooperation and the development of SSE networks**, facilitating joint work between entities in the sector. Initiatives such as **Social Markets** and the promotion of **inter-cooperative cooperation** have created stronger and more resilient economic ecosystems, where collaboration is a key element for growth in the sector.

Despite these advances, there is still a need to strengthen the implementation of these policies, to improve coordination with the regional regulations and to continue working on the removal of administrative barriers that hinder the development of new entities within the sector.

Institutional recognition has made it possible to consolidate the SSE in Spain through various funding initiatives, social entrepreneurship programmes and access to European funds. These policies have boosted the sector's visibility, favouring its expansion in different areas of the economy.

5.2 The SSE Regulatory Framework in France

France has been a pioneer in the regulation of SSE at the European level. Its **SSE law of 2014** established a comprehensive framework for cooperatives, mutuals, associations and social enterprises, strengthening their role in the country's economy.

5.2.1 SSE Law of 2014

This law has strengthened the SSE sector by introducing specific financing mechanisms, tax incentives and criteria for responsible procurement. It has also promoted the creation of territorial representative bodies, such as the **Regional Chambers of the SSE (CRESS)**, which facilitate the development of the sector at local and regional level.

5.2.2 Social Clauses in Public Procurement

One of the most significant developments in France has been the inclusion of social and environmental clauses in public procurement. These measures allow a portion of public sector contracts to be allocated to SSE companies, promoting sustainable and inclusive economic models.

5.2.3 Implementation Results

Since the adoption of the SSE Law, the sector has experienced remarkable growth, with greater visibility, wider access to public and private funds, and an increase in the number of entities operating under this model.

5.3 Regulation and Institutional Support in Europe

5.3.1 European Recognition

The European Union has promoted SSE as a key pillar of sustainable economic development. Some of its main initiatives include:

- **European Action Plan for SSE**, which sets out financing and technical support strategies.
- **Structural and Investment Funds**, targeting SSE projects in different economic areas.
- **Inclusion of SSE in the European Pillar of Social Rights**, recognising its role in social cohesion and decent employment.

5.3.2 Support Programmes

Some European programmes supporting the development of SSE are:

- **EaSI Programme (Employment and Social Innovation)**: Supports SSE projects in employment, social inclusion and microfinance.
- **ERDF funds**: Funding for innovative initiatives in the field of SSE.
- **Horizon Europe**: Research and innovation programme with resources for solidarity economy models.

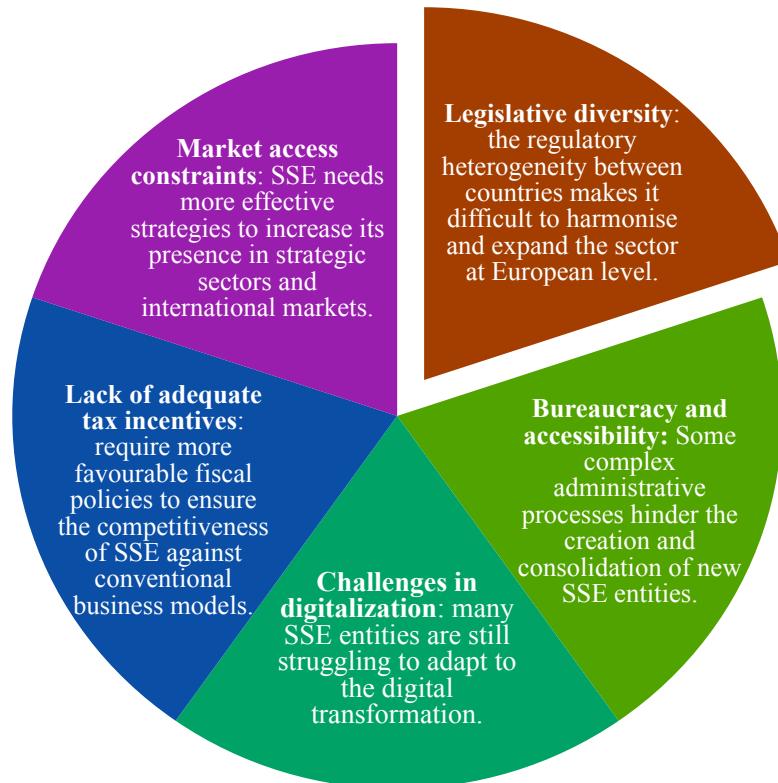
5.3.3 Responsible Public Procurement in Europe

Public procurement has been a key tool in promoting SSE within the EU. Through various directives, measures such as:

- **Inclusion of sustainability and social responsibility criteria** in public tenders.
- **Incentives for SSE firms** to participate in public tenders.
- **Increased transparency and accountability** in public procurement processes.

5.4 Challenges and Opportunities of the Policy Framework

5.4.1 Challenges

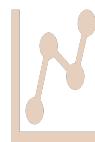


5.4.2 Opportunities



Expansion of responsible public procurement

what could increase the SSE's participation in the state and local economy



Integration of SSE in economic recovery plans

Consolidating its role in post-crisis reconstruction



Increased access to public and private finance

through European programmes and specialised funds



Growing interest in sustainable and equitable economic models, favouring the demand for goods and services generated by SSE

fostering the demand for goods and services generated by SSE



Increased inter-cooperation and collaborative networks

This enables the sector to be strengthened at national and international level

5.5 Examples of Successful Implementation

5.5.1 Spain

- **Ethical public procurement initiative in Barcelona**, which has enabled cooperatives to access municipal contracts in key sectors.
- **Social clauses in the public procurement of the City of Madrid**, benefiting SSE companies in the provision of social and environmental services.

5.5.2 France

- **CRESS (Regional Chambers of the SSE)**, which have developed effective public procurement strategies to strengthen the sector.
- **French Government's SSE Investment Fund**, which finances social innovation and solidarity economy projects.

These examples reflect how legislation and institutional support can strengthen the impact of SSE and consolidate its role in the global economy.