



ZENTRUM FÜR SOZIALE INNOVATION CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

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Five steps towards promoting social innovations within the EU (Anette Scopetta, June 2011)

Social innovations are new concepts and measures to resolve societal challenges, adopted and utilised by social groups concerned.

(ZSI, 2011, https://www.zsi.at/en/about_us/missing_statement_and_vision).

I. ESTABLISH A **THEORETICAL FRAME AND COMMON UNDERSTANDING** FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION WITHIN THE EU

II. **ANCHORING** SOCIAL INNOVATION WITHIN **INSTITUTIONS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS**:

- stipulate social innovations within Structural Funds regulations, in particular within the ESF;
- further promote a Social Innovation Network between social innovators¹, research and EC;
- build on and highlight the work of Unit D4 (as well as involve staff experienced via prior DG Empl Unit's work such as EQUAL, transnational cooperation and innovation) in close collaboration with DG Enterprise, DG Research, DG Regio, DG INFSO, etc.;
- guide ESF programming of Member States/regions in respect of social innovations; and
- initiate responsibility for social innovation on the Member States level: Assigning responsible departments (e.g. ESF-Departments) within Ministries of EU 27, create a network of social innovation enhancing programmes / policy designers and delivery, etc.

III. **CAPACITY BUILDING** ON ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNANCE:

- pool practical as well as theoretical knowledge on already developed social innovations via exchange, learning and networking;
- establish a pool of service providers advanced in advising administration in respect of policy designs as well as counselling (potential) project managers as social innovators; and
- create transnational thematic learning networks for social innovators (peer learning) based on knowledge gained within EQUAL networks as well as of the Communities of Practice.

IV. PROVIDE **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES** FOR:

- social innovation pilots on issues of great concern for EU 2020 strategy (e.g. ageing, health care system, migration, etc.) via the Social Innovation Programme (with minimal administrative burdens; launched by the EC itself, not by the Member States);
- networking social innovators as well as actors potentially active in the field;
- systematic learning from experiences and sharing knowledge on social innovations (provide support to and use vocational education in the framework of The European School of Social Innovation); and
- fundamental research on social innovations (European Social Innovation Theory, indicators, evaluation designs, impact analysis).

V. **SUSTAINABILITY** OF SOCIAL INNOVATIONS:

- assist in improving cross-sector linkages in particular between the civil society, the private, Managing Authorities and politicians; and
- add knowledge in transforming successful pilots into social innovations (mainstreaming, entry of good practices into ESF policies, etc.); and
- organise Social Innovation Brokerage and transfer events.

¹ (Potential) social innovators are to be understood as creative human individuals with diverse institutional & thematic backgrounds (from civil society to the private and the public)