

European Competence Centre for Social Innovation

Social Innovation Forum 2025

Key information

Date: 1-2 October 2025

Location: Onsite

Agenda

Time (CEST)	1 October
09:00 - 09:45	Welcome Coffee and Registration
09:45 - 10:05	Welcome Remarks European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion, representative European Competence Centre for Social Innovation, representative
10:05 - 10:15	Overview of the Day 1
10:15 - 10:45	Keynote: The Future of the European Welfare State: Why Investing in People is Crucial to Stay Competitive Robin Maialeh, Chair of the Board, RILSA Associate Professor of Economics
10:45 - 11:45	Panel Discussion
11:45 - 12:30	Coffee Break
12:30 - 13:00	Keynote: A Government Official's Perspective on the Challenges of Scaling, and why it Sometimes Doesn't Work Bairbre Nic Aongusa, Assistant Secretary, Community Development, Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, Ireland
13:00 - 14:30	Lunch

14:30 - 15:30	<p>Workshop. CoP on Social Innovation: Social Innovation for System-Level Change</p> <p>Objectives: - Build a shared understanding of how to identify and address complex social issues through a systems perspective. - Explore and co-develop practical, cross-sector strategies to enhance the systemic impact of social innovation and its integration into public policy. Complex social challenges are systemic, dynamic, and multisectoral in nature, requiring collective, adaptive, and coordinated responses. These challenges cannot be addressed through simple or linear solutions; instead, they call for approaches that combine social innovation with active listening, cross-sector collaboration, and the integration of solutions into public policy. This session will explore how societal challenges—and their root causes and effects—can be better understood through a systems lens, with examples of innovation at the systems level. Through interactive small-group sessions, participants will examine ways to identify complex challenges and collaboratively experiment with co-creating strategic responses. The session aims to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange among Social Innovation Community of Practice (SI CoP) members, with a focus on strengthening the systemic impact of social innovation.</p>
14:30 - 15:30	<p>Workshop. CoP on Social Inclusion: Strengthening Competitiveness Through Effective Social Inclusion</p> <p>Objectives: This workshop will explore how robust and resilient societies are supported by effective social inclusion policies and services. The insights gathered will help shape the 2026 Work Programme of the ESF+ Community of Practice (CoP) on Social Inclusion. Key objectives include: - Identifying ESF+ actions and projects that contribute to resilient societies and strong communities. - Developing a draft outline for the 2026 Work Programme of the CoP. - Exploring how ESF+ can contribute to shifting social inclusion approaches from a Care – Cure – Prevent logic towards a Prevent – Cure – Care logic. The workshop will focus on the long-term impact of social inclusion initiatives. It will consider how reducing institutionalisation, providing affordable housing for all, and supporting children’s development are not only morally vital but essential for building vibrant communities and thriving economies. Participants will discuss how inclusive systems form the foundation for social cohesion, economic strength, and individual well-being.</p>
14:30 - 15:30	<p>Workshop. CoP on Migrant Integration: Increasing Adaptability in Migrant Integration: Rethinking Resilience in European Societies Through a Multi-Level Approach</p> <p>Objectives: - The workshop aims to explore the multi-level approach towards migrant integration needed to build resilient, cohesive communities that are invested in ensuring that everyone can be received respectfully and find their place in society. - It will provide participants concrete examples on efficient funding issues, and identification of vulnerabilities as well as specific needs to reflect on and leverage for the future programming period. A 2-hour session aimed at Managing Authorities, Civil Society Organisations and innovators taking part at SIF2025. This hands-on experiential workshop reveals different levels of needs/activities. The Co-Creation Lab allows for multi-level governance approaches and partnerships to be tested in a short practice and therefore potential adaptability of programmes.</p>
14:30 - 15:30	<p>Workshop. CoP on Employment, Education and Skills: Understanding Long-Term Change in Skills Demand and How It May Reshape Our Training Systems</p> <p>Objectives: - Identify what skills will be needed in the future - Discuss why this necessitates a deep restructuring of training systems - Discuss and develop the key steps of this restructuring This workshop focuses on how skills demand is expected to change and how skill formation systems can be developed in a way to enable swift adaptation to these changes. In a highly interactive scenario-based simulation exercise using design fiction, participants will be invited to reflect on concrete examples of job descriptions and will be encouraged to bring in their own experience to small group discussions about possible strategies to adapt training systems. We will aim to discuss especially the challenges related to up- and reskilling low-skilled and vulnerable groups.</p>

14:30 - 15:30	<p>Workshop. CoP on Material Support: Building Resilient Material Support Systems</p> <p>Objectives: - To share and discuss current strategies, action plans, and experiences regarding how various countries and organisations are preparing their material support systems for crises. - To identify the key factors for ensuring the readiness, flexibility, and continuity of material support in times of crisis. - To engage participants in identifying actionable steps and priority areas for strengthening crisis preparedness, with particular attention to the adaptability of measures to evolving target groups, needs, and contexts. - To encourage dialogue among stakeholders to enhance collaboration and resilience in material support systems through the effective use of ESF+ and complementary initiatives. This workshop will explore how material support systems can be designed to withstand and adapt to crises, while ensuring continued assistance for the most vulnerable groups. The discussion will focus on institutional and community preparedness, the adaptability of delivery mechanisms, and the potential for innovative solutions, with a particular emphasis on how the ESF+ can strengthen resilience and support coordinated responses across Member States. The session will provide a platform for sharing experiences, practical approaches, and reflections on ways to strengthen systems in response to current and future challenges.</p>
14:30 - 15:30	<p>Workshop. ALMA Network: Evaluation Featuring Key Findings and Practical Examples From ALMA Network Members on Measuring Soft Outcomes, and Successful Approaches to Impact Evaluation for NEETs From Outside the ALMA Network</p> <p>Evaluation – Key Findings and Practical Examples from ALMA Network Members on Measuring Soft Outcomes: The first part of workshop will present an overview on the work and discussions of the ALMA evaluation subgroup, offering concrete insights through the example of the Greek ALMA project alongside other approaches focusing on the evaluation of soft outcomes within the NEET target group. The session will conclude with an open space for collective discussion and exchange.</p> <p>Evaluation – Successful Approaches to Impact Evaluation for NEETs from Outside ALMA: Based on practical examples the second part of workshop will go beyond ALMA and will explore successfully implemented evaluation tools from different programmes and EU Member States measuring soft outcomes and distance travelled by participants. The session will also conclude with an open space for collective discussion and exchange.</p>
15:30 - 16:00	Coffee Break
16:00 - 17:00	Workshops, Part 2
18:00 - 20:00	Dinner

Time (CEST)	2 October
08:45 - 09:15	Welcome Coffee and Registration
09:15 - 09:25	Overview of the Day 2
09:25 - 09:45	Presentation: Achievements & Future Plans of the European Competence Centre for Social Innovation
09:45 - 10:45	<p>Social Innovation Presentations</p> <p>Five projects from the Social Innovation Market 2025 will present their ideas on stage. Each project offers a unique approach to addressing challenges in employment, education, skills, or social inclusion.</p>

10:45 - 11:30	Coffee Break
11:30 - 12:30	Panel Discussion & Q&A with Social Innovation Representatives
12:30 - 15:00	Social Innovation Market Visit the Social Innovation Market to explore 15 projects from across Europe tackling social challenges in employment, education, skills, and inclusion. Meet the innovators and learn more about their solutions.
13:30 - 15:00	Lunch
15:00 - 16:30	Panel: Learning from Day 1 Workshops and Upcoming Activities of the CoPs and ALMA Network
16:30 - 17:00	Closing Remarks
18:00 - 20:00	Dinner