



GREECE

**SOCIAL  
AND  
SOLIDARITY  
ECONOMY**

REPORT





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# Acronyms

Below are the common acronyms used throughout this report:

**AMKE:** civil non-profit organisation (as established under Greek law)

**GDP:** gross domestic product

**Koin.S.Ep.:** social cooperative enterprise (as established under Greek law)

**Koi.S.P.E.:** limited liability social cooperative (as established under Greek law)

**MoL:** Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity

**SME:** small to medium-sized enterprise

**SSE:** social and solidarity economy

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# Executive summary

## Background to the study

This report presents the findings of a study undertaken to provide an overview of the current social and solidarity economy (SSE) sector in Greece, and to explore the barriers and opportunities for the development of an effective ecosystem to support SSE organisations.

It forms part of a larger project of technical support focusing on the SSE provided by the British Council to the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity (MoL) in Greece with the funding of the European Commission through the Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS).

This combined quantitative and qualitative study is the largest to date on the SSE in Greece, in terms of the numbers of organisations that participated. It builds upon previous mapping studies and research to give a fuller picture of the SSE sector in Greece. The report aims to serve as a useful tool for the MoL to comprehensively understand the characteristics and the needs of the SSE ecosystem in Greece when designing initiatives and policies to support the SSE sector. It may well be a useful tool to other actors seeking to support SSE organisations, and of course, to the organisations themselves.

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## The SSE in Greece

The broader social and solidarity economy in Greece is both an old and a new phenomenon. Its roots lie in a number of factors, the most important being the cooperative movements developed over years, but recent legislation and political movements have galvanised much of the recent activity. This means that the SSE sector in Greece is at in a relatively early stage. It is changing dynamically, but at the same time has an urgent need for support, particularly in the form of skills development, networking, finance and enabling policies.

As this report reveals, there is great potential for the SSE in Greece to grow and expand its impact. SSE organisations are helping to tackle some of the country's most significant challenges, notably poverty and unemployment while they are also seeking to promote and demonstrate alternative business models that incorporate social benefit alongside their economic activity.

SSE in Greece is currently significantly underdeveloped in relation to other European countries with the majority of SSE organisations in Greece been small in size and recently established, facing at the same time highly challenging economic conditions with regard to their start-up activities, financial sustainability and market growth.

At the same time the current challenging economic and social landscape in Greece is viewed by SSE actors as a reason why a stronger SSE is needed in order to create new opportunities, address unemployment, and establish new economic and entrepreneurial models in areas where mainstream paradigms have failed.

### Key findings

This study reached out to 1,265 SSE organisations through both quantitative and qualitative research methods. An online survey, sent to these organisations, received 251 responses. More targeted focus groups and interviews were also carried out

with key stakeholders within the SSE sector.

#### **Key findings from the survey, focus groups and interviews include:**

**Starting up:** 68 per cent of the SSE organisations that responded to the survey have been established in the last five years, from which over 40 per cent in the last three years. In short, much of the SSE sector can be categorised as young/early stage. This predicament may justify the fact that a large

percentage (74 per cent) have a turnover under €50,000 per year, as their short period of operation makes it difficult to get established in the market.

**Working locally:** most operate at neighbourhood, local and regional levels, though a significant minority work nationally or internationally.

**People-focused:** 78 per cent are attempting to address the problem of unemployment. This is by far the most common social objective for SSE organisations, and 37 per cent reinvest any financial surplus into job creation.

**Helping those in need:** 55 per cent are helping the long-term unemployed, whilst significant proportions are supporting the elderly, those with a learning or physical disability, refugees and asylum seekers.

**Diverse industries:** SSE organisations operate across a wide range of industries and sectors, including education, food production, social care, tourism and recycling.

**Optimistic for the future:** 68 per cent expect to increase their turnover in the next 12 months, and a similar proportion expect to increase the number of people they employ. Over 90 per cent believe that the SSE has the potential to grow in their industry and in their geographical area.

**Needing money:** access to appropriate finance is by far the biggest barrier to sustainability and growth, be that obtaining grants and loans for seed capital and/or cash flow for everyday operations.

**More inclusive:** 35 per cent are led by women, and levels of women in the workforce are higher than in mainstream business.

**Educated leaders:** 41 per cent of those leading an SSE organisation have a postgraduate or doctoral level of education which is an enabling condition for their training in operating an SSE organisation, as many of them may need such training.

These findings indicate the existence of a dynamic set of organisations who see significant potential for the SSE growth in Greece.

### Other key findings from the qualitative research revealed:

- Greece has a diverse and pluralistic landscape of different types of SSE organisations with different motivations and means of operation. Presently, this predicament has the drawback of segmentation and fragmentation among them.
- An SSE sector emerging organically and spontaneously, often fuelled by the social movements of 2008 to 2011, is in need of more structure as it matures
- A range of ‘micro’ internal and operational challenges for SSE organisations, particularly regarding decision-making and conflict resolution
- A range of ‘macro’ external factors which can help or hinder SSE organisations, including government regulation, access to financial tools, and a broader lack of awareness of the SSE within society
- A belief that the SSE in Greece will grow in the coming years, because of its ability to address unemployment, its link to communities and social movements, and the broader inefficiency of traditional business models to create economic value without producing negative externalities
- Some potential areas for the SSE to expand, including tourism, energy production, waste management, and social services.

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## Challenges and recommendations

From the findings, the report ends with an overview of the challenges and recommendations for growth within the SSE sector in Greece in relation to creating an effective enabling system. They focus on four main areas: awareness and promotion, funding and finance, training, education and skills, and legislation and regulation.

### Key recommendations include:

- Establishing a national centre for SSE in Greece
- Creating and implementing a holistic communication and awareness-raising strategy to promote the SSE movement.
- Providing start-up seed capital (in the form of grants or loans) to emerging SSE enterprises
- Convening a social finance task force to identify alternative forms of finance
- Importing and adapting proven specialist learning programme models
- Providing specialist social impact measurement training

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# Introduction

This study offers a description and mapping of the SSE in Greece. It aims to inform government bodies, organisations in the SSE eco-system and citizens about the state of the SSE sector across the country. The report is divided in the following sections:

1. Overview of the SSE landscape in Greece
2. Mapping the SSE in Greece
3. Recommendations for creating an effective SSE eco-system in Greece.

Quantitative and qualitative analysis has been used to identify the key features and issues that characterise the SSE in Greece. Together, the quantitative and qualitative findings can provide a significant contribution to future policy-making in Greece by offering:

- Input on the actions necessary for providing the enabling conditions for SSE development and expansion
- “Self and social perceptions” of SSE organisations and related actors in the SSE sector.

Section 1 provides an overview of the social and economic conditions in Greece, the SSE context and legislation relevant to the SSE. It also offers a detailed overview of specific actors across the SSE eco-system who provide various support for SSE organisations. It concludes with a literature review. By offering a description of the “periphery” of the SSE eco-system, this section offers a concise overview of the eco-system at large.

Section 2 is concerned with a mapping of the SSE organisations in Greece, which constitutes the core object of this study. The methodology behind the study is described, including an explanation of the approaches used and a categorisation of the organisations included in the study. The results of both the quantitative and qualitative research are then presented in detail.

Section 3 includes a set of recommendations for developing an effective SSE eco-system in Greece, based on the challenges identified and recommendations proposed by respondent SSE organisations and other stakeholders. Lastly, a set of recommendations for future research is also provided.



# 1. Overview of the SSE landscape in Greece

This section briefly looks at the current economic and social landscape in Greece, provides an overview of the SSE context, sets out legislation related to the SSE, and gives a detailed overview of the key actors in the SSE sector working with and supporting the country's SSE organisations. It also provides a review of existing research on the SSE in Greece to offer background context to the mapping exercise presented in Section 2 of this report.

# 1.1 The economic and social context in Greece<sup>1</sup>

Greece lives in a prolonged and multifaceted crisis. The country's economic depression is one of the greatest ever faced by a developed nation in the 20th and 21st centuries, and this has had, and continues to have, a profound impact:

- In 2016 and the first two quarters of 2017, unemployment rate ranges from 23.5 per cent in 2016 to 21.1 per cent during the second quarter of 2017 (up from 7.2 per cent in 2007)
- Amongst 15-to-29-year-olds, the unemployment rate is at 38.4 per cent in 2016 while it has peaked in 2013 reaching 48.7 per cent
- Minimum salaries and median wages have fallen significantly, with the median monthly gross wage falling from €1,997 in 2009, to €1,048 in 2015
- The percentage of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion was 35.6 per cent in 2016, being almost the same since 2012
- The percentage of people facing material deprivation was 38.5 per cent in 2016, with children and adolescents facing the highest percentage (42.3 per cent).

**Table 1: Population, employment and GDP**

Total population*	10,816,286
Labour force**	Total: 4,804,500 Male: 2,656,800 Female: 2,147,700
Labour force by employment status**	Employed: 3,673,600 Unemployed: 1,130,900 Economically non-active: 4,408,300
Main economic sectors by percentage of GDP**	Services: 81% Industry: 15% Agriculture: 4%
Major cities by population	Athens: 664,046 Thessaloniki: 325,182 Patra: 213,984 Irakleio: 173,993 Piraeus: 163,688
GDP percentage change at constant prices of 2010	2012: -7.3% 2013: -3.2% 2014: 0.4% 2015: -0.2% 2016: 0.0%
Total GDP at current prices (in €)	2012: 191.2 billion 2013: 180.7 billion 2014: 177.9 billion 2015: 175.7 billion 2016: 175.9 billion

<sup>1</sup> Greece in Figures 2017, July – September 2017, Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2017, Sections 9 and 11. [http://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1515741/GreeceInFigures\\_2017Q3\\_EN.pdf/dbbdb56b-4a0b-4672-a83f-1a316716c09a](http://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1515741/GreeceInFigures_2017Q3_EN.pdf/dbbdb56b-4a0b-4672-a83f-1a316716c09a)

GDP percentage change at current prices	2012: -7.6%
	2013: -5.5%
	2014: -1.5%
	2015: -1.3%
	2016: 0.1%

\*As of 2011 | \*\* As of 2016 | Sources: Hellenic Statistical Authority

## 1.2 The SSE context in Greece

As in all countries, definitions are debated, but the SSE sector in Greece is widely considered to include organisations that adhere to the following principles<sup>2</sup> :

- Take part in economic and/or entrepreneurial activity
- Have a clear social purpose
- Are independent and democratic in their governance
- Reinvest profits, distribute part of them to employees and/or channel them to social goals, rather than distribute them to stakeholders as return on investment.
- Are based on collective action.

While cooperativism has a long history in Greece in relation to the agricultural and farming sector (Karyotis and Kioupkiolis, 2014), prior to 2000 the SSE sector was extremely small in formal terms, and quite insignificant in numbers until 2011. This is highlighted in both the mapping study carried out for this report and the previous studies discussed in section 1.5<sup>3</sup>, most notably the 2014 mapping report by the European Commission as part of its Europe-wide project to assess the scale of social enterprise.

Greece's challenging socioeconomic context has played a major role in the growth of the SSE sector since 2010, including factors such as a high unemployment rate, a lack of job security in the private and public sector, reduced public sector spending, and the emergence of political movements linked with the SSE.

For the SSE sector, this creates diverse dynamics, as there are significant social problems to address and a need for new models and approaches to tackle them. At the same time, the decline of more traditional entrepreneurial models and mentalities has created space wherein SSE can grow. However, all forms of economic development are affected by these socioeconomic conditions, and the SSE is no exception.

Furthermore, Law 4019/2011 (discussed in Section 1.3) provided new institutional tools allowing informal collectives and other groups of individuals to create their own formal SSE organisations. This was superseded by law 4430/2016, which aimed to provide more clarity and detail.

Still, the SSE sector in Greece remains small in comparison to other countries in the European Union. Depending on the definitional aspects and unit of analysis used, it can be a chal-

<sup>2</sup> Adherence to this principles is not an ON/OFF issue, but rather a matter of degree

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Varvarousis and Kallis, 2017

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lenging task to estimate the economic impact of the SSE in Greece. Following the European Social and Economic Committee definition of social economy that is compatible with the European System of Accounts (ESA 95) and the System of National Accounts (SNA 93) we can determine the unit of analysis, which in this case includes cooperatives, mutuals, social enterprises, not-for-profit institutions, social and solidarity economy organizations, associations and foundations to say the least.<sup>4</sup> Under this perspective the economic impact of social economy organizations was €2.5 billion in 2012 (no newer analysis could be found), which accounts for 1.4 per cent of national GDP (compared to an average of five to ten per cent in other European Union countries <sup>5</sup>). If the unit of analysis is restricted to the set of conditions prescribed by national legislation (L.4430/2016, see Section 1.3) on SSE organisations and follows a strict definition, then the economic impact is significantly lower, at €6.9 million in 2016 (less than 0.01 per cent of GDP <sup>6</sup>).

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4 «The Social Economy in the European Union», Chapter 3, p.p. 21-29, 2012, European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), José Luis Monzón Campos and Rafael Chaves Ávila, <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/qe-30-12-790-en-c.pdf> For details on definitions see Chapter 3, and «Recent Evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union», Chapter 2, EESC, 2017, <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/files/qe-04-17-875-en-n.pdf>

5 See “Report #7: Defining Social Enterprises”, I.Nasioulas, GECES, European Commission, 2013, [http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/social\\_business/docs/expert-group/20121127-contrib/nasioulas\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/social_business/docs/expert-group/20121127-contrib/nasioulas_en.pdf) and “Social enterprises, Clusters and Networks of Social Economy”, I.Nasioulas, Thessaloniki 2013., p.p. 102-111.

6 “Annual Report and Action Plan for the development of SSE Ecosystem, 2017 – 2023”, Special Secretariat for SSE, MoL, [www.ypakp.gr/uploads/docs/10678.pdf](http://www.ypakp.gr/uploads/docs/10678.pdf)

## 1.3 Legislation relating to SSE

The earliest reference in Greek legislation relating to the broader spectrum of social enterprise and cooperatives is the 11th article of the 1864 constitution, which gave Greek citizens the “right to associate”, a clause that is still in force today.

A significant number of laws with respect to cooperatives have been passed since (including many different regulations between 1984 and 1994), which some consider to have had a negative effect on the model in general, in that they have made things more complicated and administratively burdensome<sup>7</sup>. An overview of key legislation relating to cooperatives is presented in Table 2, and additional legislation can be found in Appendix 4.

One of the most important and recent pieces of legislation is law 4019/2011, which defined social economy and social cooperative enterprises in Greece for the first time. This law established the social cooperative enterprise (Koin.S.Ep.) as a new legal form in 2011, giving citizens of and residents in Greece the possibility to create cooperative enterprises with a social purpose. There are three types of social cooperative enterprises prescribed by this law, depending on the pursued objective, the social cooperative enterprises for integration, the social services’ social cooperative enterprises and the social cooperative enterprises with a collective and productive purpose whilst raising the profile of the SSE, this legislation did receive some criticism for its focus and scope, and for being excessively bureaucratic (see Section 1.5.4). An important aspect of L.4019/2011 was the creation and introduction of the MoL Registry for Social Cooperative Enterprises (Koin.S.Ep) and Social Cooperatives of Limited Liability (Koi.S.P.E) wherein all organisations were recorded.

In October 2016, the law 4430/2016 came into effect, which elaborated on the “Social and Solidarity Economy and the Development of its Actors”. This legislation offered a new framework for diverse types of organisations or enterprises that have a clear collective and social impact, while also addressing a social need. This aimed to supersede and improve on previous legislation, including law 4019/2011, which is no longer in force. With L.4430/2016 a number of issues have been addressed, especially with regards to the spirit of the law. In particular, SSE organisations are no longer defined in terms of their legal form, but by their legal status, (i.e., any legal form may qualify as an SSE organisation, as long as it satisfies the criteria set forth by the law). In short, these criteria concern entrepreneurial activity in the private market (revenues from public bodies should not exceed 65 per cent of total turnover within a three-year period), democratic governance (one member – one vote), and a well-defined social purpose with profit allocated to collective and social benefit (up to 95 per cent of yearly profits).

Furthermore, the idea of ‘social impact’, in terms of collective and social benefit, has been defined and operationalised, something that was missing from previous legislation. Lastly, the MoL registry of SSE organisations was opened up to all legal forms that obtain the status of an SSE organisation.

<sup>7</sup> See Kontogeorgos and Sergaki, 2015

**Table 2: SSE relevant legislation**

Policy type	Policy name	Relevance to SSE
Constitution of Greece, 1864	Article 11 of Constitution	Provides for the right of association: “Greeks have the right to associate, respecting the laws of the state”.
Constitution of Greece, 1952	Article 109 of Constitution	States that: “cooperatives, both agricultural and urban, are under the protection of the state, systematically supporting their development”.
Constitution of Greece, 1975	Article 12 of Constitution	Provides for the institutional insurance of cooperatives and their differentiation from associations of individuals and corporations.
Law	602/1915	Encourages the creation of cooperatives, while at the same time enabling cooperative organisations operating in other legal forms to acquire the legal form of a cooperative.
Women’s Cooperatives	L. 921/1979	Provides for the creation of the first agricultural women’s cooperatives, promoting local development and culture.
Cooperative Banks – Credit Cooperatives	Law 2076/1992	Provides for cooperative banks in Greece.
Limited Liability Social Cooperatives	2716/1999, article 12	Provides for the de-institutionalisation of the mentally ill through social cooperatives with limited liability.
Civil Non-Profit Organisations	GCC 741	States that civil non-profit companies constitute a contractual agreement between two or more parties, bearing collateral commitment to contribute so as to pursue common causes, especially economic.
Social economy and social entrepreneurship	L. 4019/2011	Focuses on the establishment the Social Cooperative Enterprise as a new enterprise type (Κοινωνική Συνεταιριστική Επιχείρηση-Κοιν.Σ.Επ.).
Social and Solidarity Economy and the development of its actors	Law 4430/2016	Provides a new framework for different types of not for profit organisations and enterprises that follow democratic governance and have a clear collective and social impact, while covering a social need with an alternative to the market.
Associations	GCC articles 78 – 106	Provides for associations as not for profit entities.
Foundations	GCC article 108	Defines Foundations as entities that use their assets to serve a specific purpose.

## 1.4 Overview of existing research on the SSE sector in Greece

As the SSE is a relatively new concept in Greece, very little research has been carried out on the country’s social enterprise sector. While some academic papers, books and reports have been published by international organisations (including an initial mapping of the social enterprise eco-system in 2014 by the European Commission), much of the research on the broader social economy has primarily focused on agricultural and farming cooperatives (Karyotis and Kioupiolis, 2014).

The following overview of existing research on the SSE sector in Greece focuses on the most relevant literature across four key areas:

- Academic papers and books introducing the SSE in the Greek context
- Politically oriented literature analysing and exploring the SSE as an outcome of the political mobilisations of 2011 and onwards
- Policy reports aiming to fertilise and facilitate the growth of the SSE in Greece
- Research aiming to quantify the scale of the SSE in Greece.

A comprehensive list of research literature in this field, including ongoing and planned research, can be found in the References section of this report.

### **1.4.1 Academic papers and books introducing the SSE in the Greek context**

The most notable publication in this category is the work of Dr Takis Nikolopoulos and Dr. Dimitris Kapogiannis titled *Introduction to the Social and Solidarity Economy*. Published in 2014, it offers a systematic overview of the key concepts of social economy, solidarity economy and the third sector. The Institute of Social Economy has also published a series of books edited by Dr Ioannis Nasioulas, i.e. *Social Economy Themes* (2016), *Social Economy in Greece and its Social Capital* (2012), *Greek Social Economy Revisited - Voluntary, Civic and Cooperative Challenges in the 21st Century* (2012), providing deeper theoretical elaboration on key aspects of the SSE.

Other research complements these publications, such as research by the International Organisation of Industrial and Service Cooperatives (CICOPA) on behalf of the International Labour Organization in 2013 titled *Promoting Cooperatives and the Social Economy in Greece*. This report makes recommendations about future research, monitoring and policies (drawing on examples from abroad) to help support Greece's cooperative sector. The report's primary recommendation is to establish "development centres dedicated to the development of cooperatives and the social economy" in priority locations.

### **1.4.2 Politically oriented literature analysing and exploring the SSE as an outcome of the political mobilisations of 2011 and onwards**

In this area, research looking at self-organised ventures emerging from the economic crisis is of particular interest. This more politically oriented literature focuses on ventures primarily active in the fields of health, food security and education, and views the SSE as a potential vehicle for mainstream social transformation rather than a complementary sector to the mainstream economy (see, for example, Varvarousis and Kallis, 2017).

### **1.4.3 Policy reports aiming to fertilise and facilitate the growth of the SSE in Greece**

The *Outline Strategy and Priorities for Action to Develop the Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship in Greece*, written in 2013 by an independent expert steering committee<sup>8</sup>, draws attention to the need for cultural change (valuing cooperation, solidarity and

<sup>8</sup> The report states: "This report is the result of the common analysis and reflection of a Committee of independent Greek and European experts, appointed jointly by the Greek Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion General Directorate of the European Commission."

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community development), structural change (ensuring independence from both the public and private sectors) and economic change (creating new links between social economy organisations and mainstream organisations). The report identifies a lack of comprehensive start-up support, integration in higher education and social finance options, and presents a series of detailed policy recommendations — from national and regional support centres, to a social finance taskforce. The report also recognises SSE organisations as being able to have “any legal form” and that there will therefore be entities that “are not registered, or do not have the intention to register under law 4019/2011.” It also emphasises common characteristics of SSE organisations: a primary social objective, decisions taken democratically, and the use of surplus or profit to further the social mission.

#### **1.4.4 Research aiming to quantify the scale of the SSE in Greece**

There have been recent efforts to systematically study the SSE in Greece in quantitative terms.

With regard to quantitative data on SSE in Greece, Ketsetzopoulou’s 2010 paper titled *Social Entrepreneurship in Greece* uses statistical information from 2003 to estimate that employment in the social sector in Greece accounts for 1.8 per cent of total employment (compared to the European Union average of six per cent), with 70,000 people employed across the social sector (1.8 per cent of total employment, 2.9 per cent of wage-earning employment). It also categorises various SSE entity types, including 110 agro-tourist cooperatives with an explicit social purpose, often founded by women, and 14 Limited Liability Social Cooperatives that support the integration of people with mental health problems. She also refers to a wider set of “peripheral social enterprises” that act in some ways as SSE organisations, but which do not have an established legal framework or structure.

A report by Nasioulas and Mavroeidis from 2013 titled *The Social Business Sector in Greece* refers to similar groupings, reporting 140 women’s agro-tourist cooperatives, 15 Limited Liability Social Cooperatives and 300 Social Cooperative Enterprises (under law 4019/2011). The report claims that law 4019/2011 was useful in terms of a regulatory environment, but not in terms of a wider social economy agenda and a broader social enterprise strategy. The paper identifies a number of other challenges for SSE organisations, such as the absence of clear social clauses in public procurement, limited awareness and/or demand on behalf of the public and private sectors and citizens, and finally the broader economic recession Greece faces. It also questions the extent to which existing Greek SSE organisations are ‘social’, noting that social impact measurement needs to be improved, as does reporting around finance and employment. Finally, the paper highlights some positive trends, including a wide political consensus on the importance of the social economy.

The 2017 Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity (MoL) Special Secretariat Annual Report<sup>9</sup> states that of the 907 SSE entities on their official registry, only 283 submitted an annual report in 2016, which may mean the number of active organisations is significantly lower than the total number registered. Geographically, these active entities are concentrated in Attica (45 per cent of the total), while in the other peripheries, the number remains relatively low. A total of 813 people were working in active SSE organisations in

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<sup>9</sup> [www.ypakp.gr/uploads/docs/10678.pdf](http://www.ypakp.gr/uploads/docs/10678.pdf)

2016, 224 of whom came from the most vulnerable social groups. The overall turnover of all entities was €6.9 million in 2016 — up from €6.2 million in 2015.

The report also recognises that SSE organisations tend to break even or make minimal surplus. The majority of the SSE organisations in the MoL registry are active in producing and trading in the market and delivering services of collective interest. Those active in the field of social care are concentrated primarily in Athens. The report also contains an explicit reference to the difficulty of gaining effective financing for SSE organisations, and concludes by acknowledging the need for new mechanisms and tools for effective financing.

The scientific paper *“Social enterprises, social and solidarity economy and youth: What role for policymaking?”* from 2016 by the researcher Dr Sofia Adam confirms many of these findings. Adam found that of the 632 entities that had applied to the MoL registry at the time, only 301 had managed to complete the registration process. She similarly finds that many entities are focused on productive purposes, rather than delivering a social service. Of these 632 entities, 527 did not focus on addressing issues of social inclusion or issues related to social welfare, but were orientated towards productive purposes. This finding implies that individuals after 2011 primarily set up SSE organisations not in order to explicitly serve a social goal for the wider public or particular population groups, but to create employment opportunities and carry out economic activities in a participatory and collective manner. Adam’s research also found that a majority of entities have over five foundation members (over the threshold), but that there may be family enterprises beneath this threshold. Adam concludes with some criticisms of the narrowing of the social economy, believing that it “does not open up the space for innovative policies with far-reaching transformational potential” and emphasises the need for the government to consider the wider eco-system that supports the social and solidarity economy.

A mapping study carried out in Greece on behalf of the European Commission and published in 2014 provides an overview of social enterprises and the eco-system that supports them. It estimates a total of 690 of the three main types of social enterprises, but acknowledges that not all of them are operational: 530 social cooperative enterprises (of which 100 to 200, or 30 to 50 per cent, are operational), 140 women’s agro-tourist cooperatives<sup>10</sup> (of which 90 are operational) and 23 Limited Liability Social Cooperatives (of which 16 are operational). The report also estimates 20 entities of “other forms”. So while the total headline figure is 690, the estimated total of operational enterprises is between 225 and 325. The report includes a number of other key findings:

- Law 4019/2011 is excessively bureaucratic, leading to confusion. It has discouraged social entrepreneurs, and there have been few fiscal incentives. It has, however, raised the profile of the SSE and could be considered as an enabling factor.
- There is little provision of specialist investment or finance for SSE organisations (partly because the banking system is being restructured). A lack of finance is seen as the largest barrier at both start-up and scale-up stages.
- There is a broader spectrum of social enterprises, in addition to women’s agro-tourist cooperatives, and Social cooperative enterprises and Limited Liability Social Cooperatives. These include a range of civic, professional and rural cooperatives, as well

<sup>10</sup> The women’s agro-tourist cooperatives are listed as a distinct type of legal SSE entity in the 2014 European Commission report, despite the fact that they are not included in the 4019/11 and 4430/2016 laws. Currently, as identified by our research project, there is a strong political willingness to include them in future laws.

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as companies limited by shares and with a social aim.

- SSE enterprises cannot access the business support available to mainstream start-ups and small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- There is a lack of substantial reporting on the social impact of these enterprises.
- There is a trend towards delivering social care services, filling the gaps in state provision and addressing needs within communities.
- There are very few specialist support systems such as networks, incubators, mentoring, and those providing marketing and finance/legal support.

### **1.4.5 Conclusions from the review of existing research**

Some conclusions can be drawn from this review on the existing research of the SSE sector in Greece:

- There is a strong relationship between the SSE context and the current political and economic environment. The SSE is viewed as having the potential to provide social and economic transformation, and there is wide political consensus on its potential importance, while also recognising the small size of the sector in the wider landscape.
- Data on the MoL registry demonstrates that the number of SSE organisations has grown from an estimated 700 in 2014, to 907 registered agencies (with 283 returning annual reports). Several reports identify other types of SSE organisations operating outside of the three main legal structures.
- Incremental increases in overall turnover, based on registry data, also give some evidence of growth. In 2016, the total turnover was €6.9 million in 2016, compared to €6.2 million in 2015.
- There are gaps in support structures and mechanisms for social enterprises in Greece, with regards to networks, business support services and, most prominently, financing that take into account all the particularities of SSE organisations.

## **1.5 Overview of key SSE ecosystem support actors in Greece**

During recent years, there has been a rapid increase in the number and types of entities that aim to support newly developed SSE organisations in Greece. This includes, amongst others, those who provide finance in different forms, workspaces or co-working spaces, business consultancies, incubators and accelerators, networks and trade associations.

These entities can be either local with formal or informal status, or members of international networks, such as Ashoka Greece and Impact Hub Athens. They can also be state funded or

independently funded. Some are SSE organisations themselves, while many are part of the broader third sector, i.e. non public and not for profit, and a minority belongs to the private and the public sector. What is clear is that the ‘eco-system’ for supporting the SSE is growing rapidly. However there is no sufficient data on whether existing support structures are fit for purpose or offer adequate support to SSE organisations.

The main types of SSE support organisations can be categorised in terms of their main activities and services provided, or in terms of their identity/status, either by law or according to their constitution. This section gives an overview of key SSE organisations in Greece, categorised by their identity/status, and provides a description of the services they provide. It is worth noting that while some organisations are exclusively focused on the SSE sector, others offer their services to all kinds of enterprises and third sector organisations.

In terms of entity status and/or identity, the main types of SSE support organisations in Greece can be categorised as follows:

- Social enterprise development support: incubators, accelerators and workspaces
- Financial, funding and impact investment services organisations
- Education and research institutions
- Forums and networks
- Advisory and policy organisations
- Chambers of commerce, industry associations and business advisory bodies
- Government and local authority support structures.

The main types of services these organisations provide are:

- Awareness-raising
- Business plan support services
- Social impact plan support services
- Access to finance
- Seed capital financing or funding
- Social Impact investing or funding
- Operations financing or funding
- Scale up financing or funding
- Educational programmes, content and methodology
- Market facilitation
- Policy-making
- Vulnerable group members inclusion support services
- Sustainable development support services.

An overview of specific SSE support organisations and their activities and services throughout Greece can be found below in Tables 3 to 8. It should be noted that although the specific tables include a wide range of organisations, very few of them could be characterised as SSE specialist support systems,

**Table 3: Social enterprise development support: incubators, accelerators and workspaces**

Name	Type	Location	Activities related to social enterprise
Ashoka Greece www.ashoka-impact.gr	Business and impact plan, access to finance	Athens	Runs a programme to find the most promising social initiatives in Greece and provides organisational level support to help them flourish and multiply their positive impact within society.
Athens Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation-ACEin www.acein.aueb.gr/en	Incubator, accelerator	Athens	Provides support across a range of areas, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Business development, including business model design and evaluation, strategic planning, troubleshooting, deploying and using new technologies, business plan development</li> <li>•Designing new products and services, including product development methods and processes, product or service development management and prototyping</li> <li>•Market analysis and marketing strategies, including market research and competition analysis, marketing, negotiation techniques, industry trends, e-business and social networks</li> <li>•Team management and motivation, including the creation of vision and values, assigning roles and team motivation</li> <li>•Financing, including finding business partners, gaining funding from different sources</li> <li>•Financial planning and operational issues, including tax, accounting and institutional issues, determining revenue sources and pricing</li> <li>•Legal support, including establishing a company, partner relationships, brand fortification, staff contracts, privacy issues, securing copyrights and patents.</li> </ul>
Athens Makerspace www.athensmakerspace.gr	NGO	Athens	Promotes a circular open economy in a co-working space, which may enable social entrepreneurship to boost solidarity with common fare practices shown in places like makerspaces, where creative expression and generative ideas co-create value with and for its own productive community.
Athens Startup Business Incubator (Th.E.A.) www.theathensincube.gr	Incubator	Athens	Provides a range of support, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Hosting services in modern facilities to promote entrepreneurship and collaboration</li> <li>•Counselling and advisory services in areas such as market analysis, legal and accounting issues, business plan development and human resources issues</li> <li>•Education and training</li> <li>•Networking activities</li> <li>•Coordination and internal auditing of business development milestones.</li> </ul>
Attica Business Innovation Center www.bicofattika.gr	Incubator	Lavrio	Supports the creation of new companies through a range of services, including business development, technical support, access to financial sources, finding new partners in Greece and abroad, implementation of marketing and publicity programmes and personnel training. Participates in and manages national and European programmes that aim to improve the business environment, the promotion of research and technology, and the reinforcement of the national economy.
CENTRE “ERGANI” www.ergani.gr	Incubator	Thessaloniki	Provides expert business counselling on topics of interest to potential entrepreneurs, including the formulation of business ideas, business plan design, legal issues, marketing and finance, human resource management, and public relations and networking. Offers flexible training to candidate entrepreneurs on the theoretical and practical aspects of establishing a business.

<b>Higgs</b> www.higgs3.org/?lang=en	Incubator, accelerator	Athens	Offers a range of support, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailor-made educational seminars</li> <li>• Individual advisory meetings with partners and management to address general or specific needs</li> <li>• Sharing best practices and networking opportunities with major NGOs in Greece and internationally</li> <li>• Opportunities for job-shadowing and internships in large NGOs</li> <li>• Daily support on the development of fundraising proposals directed at domestic and international donors.</li> <li>• Third sector and social economy awareness-raising.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact Hub</b> www.athens.impacthub.net/en	Accelerator, workspace	Athens	Designs and facilitate a series of acceleration services offering access to resources, knowledge and talent to help all entrepreneurs increase their positive impact and grow their business locally and internationally. Raises awareness about social entrepreneurship.
<b>INNOVATHENS</b> www.innovathens.gr/en	Accelerator	Athens	A City of Athens initiative that helps to mature innovative business ideas and turn them into start-up businesses. Supports the scaling-up of existing start-ups and provides advisory support.
<b>Militos Consulting S.A.</b> www.militos.org	Consulting, incubator, accelerator	Athens	Social enterprise business and impact plan consulting services, including ideation, start up, scale up, incubation and acceleration.
<b>Orange Grove</b> www.orangegrove.eu	Incubator, workspace	Athens	Provides a range of services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seminars and workshops with acclaimed international speakers</li> <li>• Tailor-made mentoring and coaching programmes</li> <li>• Bootcamps in cooperation with Dutch and Greek universities</li> <li>• An entrepreneur in residence to share expertise and experience</li> <li>• A flexible office space</li> <li>• Legal and accounting services</li> <li>• Collaboration and connectivity through various networking events</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship competitions.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Dynamo - Boddosaki Foundation</b> www.socialdynamo.gr	Co-working space	Athens	Offers a range of opportunities to NGOs and active citizens, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse learning opportunities for civil society organisations and groups, including the 'We are all Citizens' e-learning platform</li> <li>• Professional support from experts in the form of mentoring, consultancy and coaching on themes such as financial management, legal issues, fundraising, communications and marketing, and human resources management</li> <li>• Networking opportunities between formal and informal civil society actors and networking events for civil society, academia, and the private and public sectors</li> <li>• A creative co-working space for civil society groups.</li> </ul>
<b>Solidarity Mission</b> www.solidaritymission.org	Incubator, accelerator	Athens	Provides training, consulting, and entrepreneurial support services to support business planning and the start-up of new social enterprises. Runs a free educational programme for young people covering all aspects of social entrepreneurship, with an emphasis on personal skills development and team spirit.

**Table 4: Financial, funding and impact investment organisations**

Name	Type	Location	Activities related to social enterprise
Co-operative bank of Karditsa <a href="http://www.bankofkarditsa.gr">www.bankofkarditsa.gr</a>	Cooperative bank	Karditsa	An 'ethical' bank with a strong emphasis on social enterprises.
Pancretan Cooperative Bank <a href="http://www.pancretabank.gr">www.pancretabank.gr</a>	Cooperative bank	Crete, Athens	A cooperative bank with a focus on cooperatives and social enterprise financing.
Action Finance Initiative <a href="http://www.afi.org.gr">www.afi.org.gr</a>	Access to financing and training	Athens	Provides access to financing, through microcredits, to those who have a business idea or project but are not able to find access to the necessary funds. At the same time it supports these businesses by providing free training and support.
The People's Trust <a href="http://www.thepeoplestrust.org">www.thepeoplestrust.org</a>	Access to financing and training	Athens	A privately funded Anglo-Hellenic initiative operating as a Not-for-Profit in Greece that supports start-ups and small, existing businesses. It offers microfinancing of up to €10,000 and free of charge business development services.
Praksis: One Up Crowd-funding and Business Coaching Centre <a href="http://www.oneup.gr/homepage">www.oneup.gr/homepage</a> <a href="http://www.praksis.gr/en/our-programs/current-interventions/item/business-coaching-center">www.praksis.gr/en/our-programs/current-interventions/item/business-coaching-center</a>	Start up, investment readiness and crowd-funding support	Athens	A crowd-funding platform for young entrepreneurs to source public donations as seed capital. Provides a business coaching centre for selected candidates offering training, coaching and consulting to realise their entrepreneurial goals.
Social Economy Institute <a href="http://www.social-economy.com">www.social-economy.com</a>	Social finance and social economy policy consulting and services	Thessaloniki	Supports the development of social economy, social entrepreneurship and social impact investments, by : • Contributing to the inception, financing, quality implementation and social impact measurement of research and development projects throughout the European Union • Assisting individuals, vulnerable social groups, refugees and migrants in materialising promising vocational and personal development trajectories.
Bodossaki Foundation <a href="http://www.bodossaki.gr/en">www.bodossaki.gr/en</a>	Foundation	Athens	Offers grants to NGOs and other non-profit organisations whose mission and activities are aligned with its vision and scope of work.
Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) <a href="http://www.snf.org">www.snf.org</a>	Foundation	Athens	Offers grants to social enterprises.
Latsis Foundation <a href="http://www.latsis-foundation.org">www.latsis-foundation.org</a>	Foundation	Athens	Offers grants to organisations creating positive social impact in areas such as emergency relief of citizens in need, infrastructural improvement, NGO capacity building and community development, academic and research output reward, and highlighting of the cultural wealth of Greece.
Tima Foundation <a href="http://www.timafoundation.org">www.timafoundation.org</a>	Foundation	Athens	A philanthropic organisation that awards grants to Greek and Greek-related non-profit organisations in the areas of social welfare, healthcare, education, arts and culture, and science.

**Table 5: Education and research institutions**

Name	Type	Location	Activities related to social enterprise
Agricultural University of Athens – Agricultural Policy and Cooperatives Lab <a href="http://www2.aua.gr/en">www2.aua.gr/en</a>	University research and academic laboratory	Athens	Focuses on agricultural policy and financing for agricultural enterprises and cooperatives.
Athens University of Economics and Business - Unit of Social Entrepreneurship (USE) <a href="http://www.dose.aueb.gr">www.dose.aueb.gr</a>	University research and academic laboratory	Athens	Offers world-class education to provide students with the vision and skills to bring together business expertise and social innovation in order to maximise and sustain social impact. Advances research contributing to the development of research frameworks and practical business tools for the entrepreneurial pursuit of social impact. Develops and supports a network of academics, thought leaders, social entrepreneurs and organisations seeking to enhance their social impact through research frameworks and business tools. Creates a collaborative hub by connecting social entrepreneurs with leaders and key players in business, government and the non-profit sector to improve performance, develop new approaches, attract more resources and enhance social impact.
British Council <a href="http://www.britishcouncil.gr/en">www.britishcouncil.gr/en</a>	Charity	Athens Thessaloniki	The UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. Creates friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. Delivers a global social enterprise programme that draws on UK experience and expertise to promote inclusive economic systems and help address entrenched social and environmental problems in communities and societies. Working across 29 countries with local and international partners, providing capacity building for social entrepreneurs, promoting social enterprise education in schools and universities, and managing international development projects that foster the growth of social enterprise. Convenes policy dialogues, organises study tours and publishes reports to share knowledge and best practice in scaling the social economy.
Department of Business Administration in Messolonghi <a href="http://www.dikseo.teimes.gr/en">www.dikseo.teimes.gr/en</a>	University	Messolonghi	Offers three main courses of study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Administration</li> <li>• Management of Social Economy</li> <li>• Management of Information Systems.</li> </ul>
Heinrich Boell <a href="http://www.gr.boell.org/en">www.gr.boell.org/en</a>	Research foundation	Thessaloniki	Supports people to realise their vision for a sustainable, social and ecological society by transforming the economy to enable them to live an independent life through their own work. Works to foster the emerging socio-ecological and participatory spirit that contributes to Greece's exit from the crisis through publications, films, training, open discussions and conferences, and by strengthening cooperation between municipalities, organisations and civil society initiatives.

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<b>National Centre for Social Research</b> <a href="http://www.ekke.gr/main.php?id=437">www.ekke.gr/main.php?id=437</a>	<b>Research centre</b>	<b>Athens</b>	<p>Conducts research, studies and projects in the field of SSE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversees a documentation, support and information centre and a social economy forum, with the participation of representatives from competent public sector organisations, local authorities, social partners and social economy organisations.</li> <li>• Developed the proposal for the legal framework of the Social Economy Sector in Greece, which was adopted by the Greek Parliament in 2011 (Law 4019).</li> <li>• Operates the social economy observatory with the purpose of constituting research, documentation, monitoring and support of the social economy sector in Greece.</li> <li>• Is involved in the SEED-OER project, which has the objective of enhancing social enterprises' competitiveness and reinforcing their potential in the EU by developing an OER platform including relevant training solutions tailored to specific needs of the sector, completed by a repository of best practices, case studies and lessons learned.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Economy Institute</b> <a href="http://www.social-economy.com">www.social-economy.com</a>	<b>Research and education</b>	<b>Thessaloniki</b>	Provides research and publications on Social Economy in Greece and Europe.
<b>The People's University of Social Solidarity Economy</b> <a href="http://www.univsse.gr">www.univsse.gr</a>	<b>Informal eco-system support organisation</b>	<b>Thessaloniki</b>	<p>Delivers activities in the fields of the social and solidarity economy, self-governance and direct democracy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education, training and information</li> <li>• Research studies and publications</li> <li>• The creation, operation and development of educational and social networks</li> <li>• The activation of citizens</li> <li>• The development of cooperative and solidarity spirit</li> <li>• The promotion of collective voluntary action and international cooperation.</li> </ul>

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**Table 6: Forums and networks**

Name	Type	Location	Activities related to social enterprise
Athens Cooperatives Network	Network	Athens	Supports network members, the promotion of collaborative ventures within society, and collectives that want to start such ventures.
Coordination of Koin.S.Ep. <a href="http://www.syn-koinsep.org">www.syn-koinsep.org</a>	Network	Athens	Coordinates social cooperative businesses, catering for enterprises that are not intended for profit, and promoting alternative models of collective life, work and creation.
Hellenic Federation of Social Cooperatives with Limited Liability <a href="http://www.pokoispe.gr">www.pokoispe.gr</a>	Federation	Athens	Represents and coordinates the activities of Koi.S.P.E. enterprises, aiming for the socio-economic and professional integration of people with different abilities.
PROSKALO Cooperation Initiative for the Social and Solidarity Economy <a href="http://www.proskalo.net">www.proskalo.net</a>	Civil society organisation	Thessaloniki	Promotes the SSE and direct democracy in various sectors, especially water, food, energy, waste management and education.
Social cooperative enterprises network of Western Macedonia <a href="http://www.facebook.com/pg/diktyokoinsepdm/about">www.facebook.com/pg/diktyokoinsepdm/about</a>	Network	Western Macedonia	Provides a platform for meeting, discussing, informing and sharing experiences, synthesising proposals and promoting common positions in relation to promoting the SSE and social cooperative enterprises in western Macedonia.
Social cooperative enterprises network of Central Macedonia <a href="http://www.diktyokoinsepkm.blogspot.gr">www.diktyokoinsepkm.blogspot.gr</a>	Network	Northern Greece	Promotes cooperation with organisations across central Macedonia that recognise and support the SSE and its structures, such as social cooperative enterprises, cooperatives, ethical banks and socially supported agriculture.
Social cooperative enterprises network of Eastern Macedonia and Thraki <a href="http://www.diktyokoinsepamth.gr">www.diktyokoinsepamth.gr</a>	Network	Komotini	Supports communication and solidarity relations among its members, the dissemination of information and good practices in the field of social entrepreneurship, as well as the cooperation of its members to best address the challenges and problems currently faced by the social cooperative enterprises. Aims to develop a channel of communication with all relevant public and private bodies, as well as representatives of civil society at the national, regional and local levels who assist and support the development of the social economy and the management of financial instruments.
Social Entrepreneurship Forum <a href="http://www.seforum.gr">www.seforum.gr</a>	Network	Greece	Promotes social entrepreneurship based on shared values, principles and features. Stimulates dialogue among social economy enterprises, stakeholders and support organisations, to boost efficient networking and cooperation, develop appropriate dedicated financial-economic tools, and contribute to the self-organisation of communities.

**Table 7: Advisory and policy organisations**

Name	Type	Location	Activities related to social enterprise
Dock <a href="http://www.dock.zone">www.dock.zone</a>	Advocacy, policy, networking	Athens	Contributes to the visibility of the SSE and highlights it as an effective form of economic and social organisation based on the values of solidarity, sustainability and social justice. Facilitates trading among SSE organisations at national and transnational level.
Social Economy Institute <a href="http://www.social-economy.com">www.social-economy.com</a>	Social finance and social economy policy consulting and services	Thessaloniki	Supports the development of social economy, social entrepreneurship and social impact investments, by offering expertise to public, corporate and collective organisations for policy forecast, social innovation, sustainable urbanisation, industrial design and systemic experimentation projects.
Wind of Renewal <a href="http://www.anemosananeosis.gr">www.anemosananeosis.gr</a>	Advocacy, policy	Athens	A social enterprise that focuses on the environmental, social and economic sustainability sectors to share knowledge and good practices, support networking and cooperation among organisations, propose and implement programmes across the environmental protection, circular-green economy, and local sustainability sectors and provide training with regards to the above.

**Table 8: Government and local authorities organisations**

Name	Type	Location	Activities related to social enterprise
City of Athens Development and Destination Management Agency - Epixeiro Koinonika – Enterprise Socially <a href="http://www.social.developathens.gr">www.social.developathens.gr</a>	Development agency	Athens	Offers support services for existing and future social enterprises to enhance the development of social enterprises and the social economy eco-system, in Athens and nationally. Its Enterprise Socially programme provides support across a number of areas, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodology and evaluation tool for social enterprises</li> <li>• Communication and raising awareness at all levels</li> <li>• Business plan support services</li> <li>• Investment readiness support</li> <li>• Social enterprises for integration of vulnerable groups members</li> <li>• Synergies and networking among social entrepreneurship ecosystem actors.</li> </ul>
Delphi Plus <a href="http://www.delphi.plus/english.html">www.delphi.plus/english.html</a>	Municipality of Delphi	Delphi	Works towards the enhancement of entrepreneurship, the empowerment of employment and the restoration of social cohesion, with special emphasis to social innovation, environmental sustainability and the deployment of social investments.
Development Agency of Karditsa (AN.KA S.A.) <a href="http://www.anka.gr">www.anka.gr</a>	Municipality of Karditsa development agency	Karditsa	Provides technical support to cooperative organisations located in the Karditsa Prefecture, as well as businesses and other legal entities established or constituted by these bodies.
LoutrakiPLUS <a href="http://www.loutrakiplus.com">www.loutrakiplus.com</a>	Municipality of Loutraki support structure	Loutraki	Covers four lines of intervention, linked to actions under the auspices of the European Commission, which are aimed at the development of human capital, the social and circular economy, and the empowerment of entrepreneurship.
Networking Platform for SSE organisations <a href="http://www.foreis-kalo.gr">www.foreis-kalo.gr</a>	Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare	Greece	This online platform aims for the visibility and networking of SSE organisations operating in Greece.





# 2. Mapping the SSE sector in Greece

This section presents the methodology and results of the mapping study of the SSE in Greece. It also looks at the barriers and opportunities for creating an effective enabling SSE eco-system.

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## 2.1 Aim of the study

This mapping study was initiated to provide the Greek authorities with an overview of the current SSE sector in Greece, and to explore the barriers and opportunities for the development of an effective eco-system to support SSE organisations in Greece.

Acknowledging the limitations of the depth and scope of the study, an additional aim that came up while conducting the research and producing the report was to present key areas of further research that can contribute to the further development of the SSE in Greece.

## 2.2 Study methodology

The study blended both quantitative and qualitative research methods to give a comprehensive picture of the SSE sector in Greece.

The main phases of the study were:

- Creation of a database of SSE organisations to define recipients
- Design and development of an online survey for defined recipients
- Collection and primary analysis of online survey data
- Secondary correlation analysis of online survey data
- Interviews and focus groups with selected SSE organisations to supplement the survey results
- Review of existing literature
- Peer review.

### 2.2.1 Database of SSE organisations

To define the recipients of the online survey, a database was developed of SSE organisations currently active in Greece. The database was populated using data from the official MoL registry, which was supplemented with data from other online databases and lists of organisations from SSE networks, hubs and individual researchers. All SSE organisations on the registry were contacted by telephone to verify their details and confirm if they are still operational (see Section 2.3 for an overview of how SSE organisations were categorised).

### 2.2.2 Online survey for SSE organisations

An online survey (see Appendix 1) was developed to effectively collect data from SSE organisations defined within the database.

The survey grouped questions across the following key areas:

- Identification: organisation name, type characteristics
- Economic activity: turnover, profit, and areas of business
- People: employees and leaders

- Social: objectives, impact and beneficiaries.

Recipients were required to answer all questions asked in the survey, with the exception of informal organisations which are not relevant to the questions related to the commercial aspects of more formal, structured businesses.

The survey was sent to a total of 1,265 organisations, as identified in the database which created as mentioned above. A total of 251 organisations responded (see Section 2.3 for a breakdown of responses by organisation type) and 70 claimed they were inactive or had closed down. Survey data was collected between 10 April and 31 May 2017. After an initial statistical analysis of the survey responses, a secondary statistical correlation analysis took place using SPSS software.

### 2.2.3 Interviews and focus groups

To supplement the survey results, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in Athens and Thessaloniki, and focus groups were held with participants in Athens, Thessaloniki, Karditsa and Heraklion.

In total, 15 interviews and four focus groups were conducted. The focus groups had an average of ten participants in each.

With regard to the location of the interviews and focus groups, Athens and Thessaloniki were chosen because the majority of SSE organisations are in these two areas. Karditsa was chosen because of the high level of SSE activity here (anecdotally, the flourish of SSE activity in this area is at unprecedented levels in Greece), and Crete was chosen to ensure the island context was covered.

A full list of focus group participants and interviewees can be found in Appendix 4. Most participants of the focus groups tended to be SSE organisations themselves, while the interviews involved a wider cross-section of SSE stakeholders, including support organisations, intermediaries, researchers, academics and infrastructure bodies.

### 2.2.4 Peer Review

Our findings were peer reviewed by stakeholders in Greece and experts outside of Greece. This took the form of:

- Written input from the following experts: George Keranis, Athens Development and Destination Management Agency, Social Entrepreneurship Consultant, Maryam Mohiuddin Ahmed, Founder and Co-director of the Social Innovation Lab in Lahore, University of Berkeley, Dan Gregory, Director of Policy at Social Enterprise UK

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## 2.3 Categorisation and representation of SSE organisations

### 2.3.1 Categorisation

The definition of social enterprise and SSE organisations is always an important issue at the start of any of such study. A categorisation of the different ‘types’ of entities was created based on stakeholder consultation and research from other countries. Filtering questions were used in order to include or exclude different organisations from the analysis (see Appendix 2).

The main advantages of this approach were:

- The researchers could apply filters in a consistent way. Surveys that ask respondents to classify themselves are likely to be less consistent.
- Data is gathered not only about the ‘tight’ target set but also organisations in close proximity or who may indeed be moving towards the target. These may further inform action.

The initial categorisation of SSE organisations covered three categories:

#### **Category A: SSE organisations with SSE legal form and/or status according to laws 4019/2011 and 4430/2016, which are registered with the MoL**

This category covers those organisations that meet the criteria for SSE organisations as set out in Greek law and which are already registered in the official MoL registry.

These include five groups:

- Social cooperative enterprises (Koin.S.Ep.), which are not-for-profit entities with stated collective and social benefit
- Limited liability social cooperatives (Koi.S.P.E.) that similarly to social cooperative enterprises are social enterprises with cooperative form and focus on the social and economic integration of people with psychosocial differences
- Worker cooperatives with at least three members, which are also not-for-profit
- Civil non-profit organisations (AMKE) included in the new registry (following law 4430/2016) from January to April 2017
- Civil cooperatives included in the new registry (following law 4430/2016) from January to April 2017.

#### **Category B: other SSE organisations with legal form not on the MoL Registry.**

This category includes three main groups of organisations that do have a legal status but not registered in the official MoL registry.

- Entities that meet the criteria of law 4430/2016 for being registered with the MoL but currently aren’t

- Entities that do not meet the criteria of law 4430/2016 but can be described as SSE organisations as their main objectives revolve around solving a social problem through entrepreneurship; The organisations in this group often don't have a cooperative basis, but have a primary social objective and are independent from state
- Other legal entities, including civil and rural cooperatives according to legislation 1667/1986, AMKE, and clubs and associations.

### **Category C: non-formal SSE initiatives, without a legal form**

This category includes self-organised, grassroots, locally based, democratically and participatory planned initiatives. Examples include networks 'without middlemen', social kitchens, social groceries, time banks, exchange bazaars, solidarity education entities, hacker-spaces, free software initiatives and self-organised social spaces that involve some sort of economic activity.

## **2.3.2 Representation**

The survey was sent to 1,265 organisations across all three categories:

- Category A: 882 organisations
- Category B: 263 organisations
- Category C: 120 organisations.

The intention was to reach as many organisations as possible operating in the SSE.

Category A entities were identified using the MoL registry, although it was not clear how many of these entities were active or inactive. In order to resolve this, the research team attempted to telephone all of the 882 organisations. Of the 678 organisations we managed to reach over the phone, 70 claimed they were inactive.

With regard to Category B, 263 organisations of this category were contacted.

Concerning Category C, there is no clear previous estimate of the number of organisations and the time this mapping was conducted. A total 120 initiatives were identified and contacted.

A total of 251 survey responses were received across the three categories:

- Category A: 175 responses
- Category B: 53 responses
- Category C: 251 responses

Combining the number of responses from the last two categories provides a total of 228 responses from legal entities, and 23 from informal entities.

These results far exceeded initial expectations. On the one hand, it was anticipated that the study would reach ten to 15 per cent of the entire population of Category A entities, which would amount to a range of 88 to 132 individual responses from the 812 potentially active SSE organisations.<sup>11</sup> The survey was successful in receiving 175 responses from Category A. On the other hand, the study has also included organisations and initiatives beyond the scope of law 4430/2016, according to section 1.2.

<sup>11</sup> From the telephone calls it was confirmed that 70 were not active, leaving the 812 that are potentially active.

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## 2.4 Estimating the total number of SSE organisations in Greece

Estimating the total number of SSE organisations in Greece based on the categorisations in this study poses a number of challenges. In particular:

- In Greece, the criteria concerning SSE organisations are provided by national legislation. However, there are organisations that have strong SSE characteristics but do not meet these criteria and, therefore, are not in the MoL registry. Hence, it is difficult to identify them.
- It is difficult to use a projection model depending on other countries' data because the definitions/criteria of SSE organisations differ from country to country and the socio-economic situation in Greece is highly specific. Therefore, *ceteris paribus* clauses would be questionable.
- As explained below, it is difficult to determine the exact number of active SSE organisations due to the fact a number of them do not submit an annual report verifying their status as active or inactive.
- The timing of this study coincides with the transition from the old MoL registry to the new one (after law 4430/2016). therefore, there is a gap in the available data. The current situation could change rapidly in the near future due to new legislation that allows for organisations with various legal forms beyond social cooperative enterprises and limited liability social cooperatives to register.
- Regarding Category C entities without legal form, the situation is more perplexing for two reasons. On the one hand there is no official data, and on the other those organisations often emerge and perish in shorts periods of time. This would make any attempt to estimate their number very difficult.
- Due to the fact that there is no official registry of all NGOs in Greece, usual estimation methods such as a sampling process to estimate the percentage of the NGOs that operate as SSE organisations is not possible.

The methodology used for estimating the size of the sector draws upon different sources in order to provide a relatively solid view of the SSE organisations in Greece.

According to the old MoL registry, which includes organisations that meet the criteria of the 2011 Law, 859 out of the 882 organisations registered are classified as social cooperative enterprises. Of the 678 organisations contacted by phone during this study, 70 claimed to be inactive.

The new MoL registry was introduced on 1 January 2017 and it was based on the new criteria set up in the 2016 Law. Up to October 2017, 513 SSE organisations were accepted in the new registry, of which 240 were included in the old MoL registry. Of the remaining 273, 246 are newly founded social cooperative enterprises and 27 have a different legal form (AMKE; association etc). Hence, regarding the number of category A organisations, we can

conclude that the active SSE organisations registered in the old registry are between 283<sup>12</sup> and 812. Through telephone contact, the use of past research, the 2017 Annual Report of the MoL Special Secretariat for SSE, and the number of SSE organisations that were transferred from the old registry to the new, it can be estimated that the actual number ranges from 300 to 400 entities. Another 246 organisations can be added to this total, which are included in the new registry. We should also add another 27 entities that are registered in the new registry and have legal form other than social cooperative enterprise, limited liability social cooperative and workers cooperative.

Estimates of Category A organisations add up accordingly:

Estimated number of active social cooperative enterprises and limited liability social cooperatives in the old registry	Number of social cooperative enterprises, limited liability social cooperatives and worker cooperatives in the new registry but not the old	Number of organisations in the new registry that have other legal forms (for example, AMKE, civil cooperative, associations, etc.)	Estimated number of SSE organisations according to old and new MoL registries
<b>300-400</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>573-673</b>

Regarding Category B organisations, namely those organisations not registered in the old/new registries, they can potentially be seen as SSE organisations, in that they serve a social purpose or achieve a broader social impact through their operation. They are social enterprises that follow a mode of social entrepreneurship close to the Anglo-American tradition or to a social impact business paradigm, and do not focus on or adopt cooperative characteristics in their statute. An accurate estimation of those enterprises is very difficult given the fact they are not registered in any database (official or unofficial) and they are not recognised by Greek law as part of the SSE. This research identified 263 organisations of this kind. Some could qualify for the MoL registry while others not. It has been decided to include them in this estimation to allow for a broader definition of the SSE (i.e., one that does not adhere strictly to legislative criteria, such as percentage of profit distribution, number of members, etc.).

In addition to the aforementioned legal entities, there are a great number of informal organisations that operate within the broader SSE eco-system. These organisations adopt in varying degrees the characteristics presented in Section 1.2 and, therefore, could be considered as being part of the SSE. They usually take the form of social health clinics, exchange networks, 'no middlemen' food provision networks, time banks and neighbourhood solidarity hubs. Their numbers increased significantly following 2011, but this growth decreased after a couple of years. The average lifespan of these initiatives is often short, and they are characterised by high turnover in their membership. In this context, estimating the number of informal organisations requires input from various sources.

There are websites where lists of such initiatives can be found; however, there is no information about their status (active or inactive). For example, on [www.enallaktikos.gr](http://www.enallaktikos.gr)<sup>13</sup> approximately 2,000 initiatives can be found. In the Solidarity4all database, the number of the informal SSE entities is no bigger than 300 (after excluding social cooperatives and

<sup>12</sup> [www.ypakp.gr/uploads/docs/i0678.pdf](http://www.ypakp.gr/uploads/docs/i0678.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> This result is achieved when all entities on the site are filtered according to the basic criteria for an entity to be part of the SSE.

other entities that do have a legal form). Through an indicative sampling drawing on various online databases, it was found that 70 per cent of the initiatives that have at least one post on either their website or Facebook page, are no longer operational. Based on the aforementioned data, it can be estimated that the number of entities without a legal form, adopting characteristics of SSE ranges from 400 to 600 across Greece. Although it should be clarified that this is a rough and indicative estimate that should be re-examined by future research.

Against this background, the estimate of the total number of SSE entities that constitute the entire picture of the Greek SSE eco-system is as follows:

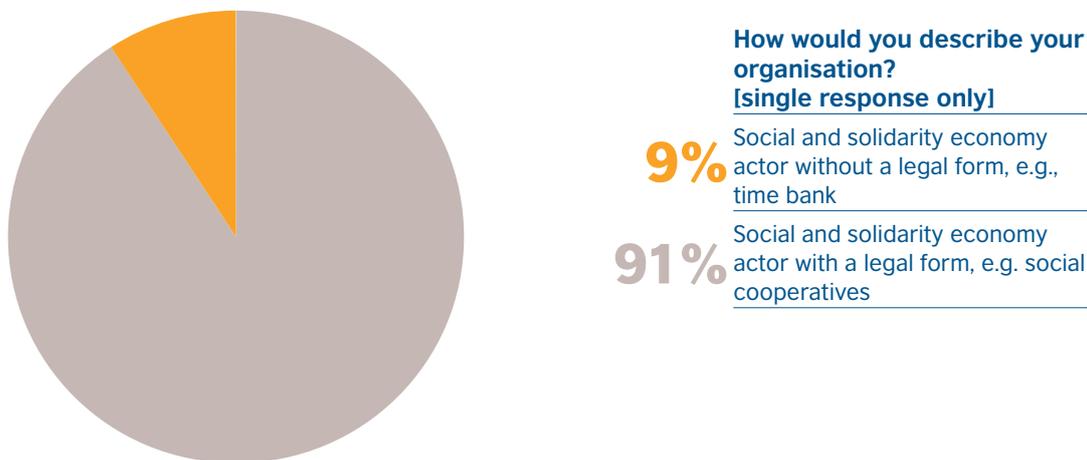
Estimated number of SSE organisations according to old and new MoL registries	Non-registered organisations with a legal form	Informal entities	Total
573-673	263	400-600	1,236-1,536

## 2.5 Results of the study

This section presents the results of both the quantitative (online survey) and qualitative (interviews and focus groups) research. It must be noted that the results have been presented rounded to zero decimal places, which means that in the reporting of percentages, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100 per cent. Several questions in the survey have the option of multiple answers, so responses in these cases will add up to more than 100 per cent.

### 2.5.1 Legal form vs informal status

From the 251 survey respondents, 91 per cent (228 entities) have a legal form and 77 per cent (175 entities) were registered in the MoL registry. Of the organisations with a legal form that are not registered, it is estimated that 35 can be eligible for registration in the sense that they seem to satisfy the criteria set forth by current legislation.

**Figure 1: Legal form vs informal status of survey respondents**

## Typology based on social perceptions with respect to legal form and activities social perceptions of organisations involved in the SSE

The interviews and focus groups provide additional insights into the different types of actors and organisations involved in the SSE sector in Greece. Out of these discussions, a more nuanced list of the different types of formal and informal organisations has been compiled to provide a more comprehensive picture of the SSE community. This depiction is based on the perceptions of interviewees combined with legislative and other formal criteria. It is quite important to take into account this typology as it reveals a more detailed picture of SSE organisations, the intentions of the people behind them and their role in the current context. As a result they may be of help to policy making, supportive measures and future research.

### **Informal entities based primarily on solidarity, voluntarism, mutual aid and democratic decision making**

These entities operate either outside of the market economy or at its margins, and promote alternative non-monetary economic activities. They attempt to create local communitarianism through various activities, such as social centres, urban and peri-urban vegetable gardens, food sovereignty and redistribution initiatives, solidarity schooling and time banks. The majority have a strong affinity with the massive mobilisations that took place between 2008 and 2011, including the so called 'Squares Movement'. Their aim is both political and social. On the one hand they try to address major social problems, and on the other they put into practice an alternative socio-economic model.

### **Informal entities based on economic activity**

There is a particular stream of informal SSE entities whose activity is both social and eco-

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nomic, and they participate regularly in the mainstream market, albeit at its margins.

### **Social Cooperative Enterprises that serve the double purpose of employment and empowerment**

These SSE organisations were founded to enable their members to make a living, and to create a political paradigm based on self-management. Some of these entities existed informally or with different legal forms before 2008, but they have substantially multiplied since then, potentially as a result of the socioeconomic and political predicament in the past decade.

### **Social cooperative enterprises and organisations with various legal forms, founded by people wanting to experiment and innovate with alternative models of work and cooperation**

The founders of such SSE organisations believe that through cooperativism they can obtain objectives they would otherwise not be able to. They usually have a focus on production.

### **Legal entities that draw on a long tradition of cooperation, including social cooperative enterprises, civil and consumer cooperatives, farmers' cooperatives and other forms of associations**

These entities have operated in particular areas in Greece for more than two decades, reflecting an interesting phenomenon as they express civil and professional groups' abilities to associate and cooperate in social, political and economic terms without any specific legislation regarding SSE.

An interesting case study is the city of Karditsa and the surrounding villages, where there is a particular eco-system, in which cooperativism and the SSE have been established culturally and operationally. Local authorities and financial institutions support the eco-system, while people understand the difference between the old model of farmers' cooperatives and the new SSE sector. Furthermore, there is an ongoing effort to develop the SSE both quantitatively and qualitatively. Karditsa's eco-system is probably one of the most important in the entire country, as it is characterised by a holistic approach to SSE in terms of organisations, networking and collective action. The degree of transformation from traditional cooperatives to SSE organisations remains to be seen.

### **Work integration social enterprises: legal entities founded to serve a particular need or to support vulnerable social groups**

These entities are primarily **social cooperative enterprises** and **limited liability social cooperatives**. They represent a small minority of the entire SSE spectrum, but include some very notable examples. In particular, limited liability social cooperatives have managed to develop successful models for integration through entrepreneurial activity during the last 18 years. A notable example is the Limited Liability Social Cooperative of Dodecanese that has managed to transform the psychiatric asylum in the island of Leros into a healthy work and social integration SSE organisation.

### **Organisations with various legal forms having a social purpose and entrepreneurial activity that are not governed according to cooperativism principles**

These organisations constitute a considerable minority. They follow a mode of social entre-

preneurship close to the Anglo-American tradition or to a social impact business paradigm, and do not focus on or necessarily adopt cooperative characteristics<sup>14</sup>. However, their governance may follow democratic principles. Such organisations derive their revenues mostly at market level (consumer, B2B, public) and/or through impact investing and grants. Furthermore, their social goals may differ in spirit and means. For example some empower vulnerable groups members through work integration (like work integration social enterprises), while others translate their revenues and profits into services for vulnerable groups, people in need or other social goals.

### **Intermediary organisations**

These include institutes, hubs, accelerators, consultancy entities and others, who work to promote the SSE from different angles and emphasise different characteristics of the SSE.

### **Social cooperative enterprises founded in response to possible favourable tax regulations**

It is believed that some organisations are registered as SSE enterprises simply to access state subsidies associated with particular legal structures. In cases where these subsidies did not emerge, or where the tax regulations changed, these organisations have often simply become inactive.

This more complex picture of the SSE sector reflects all of the ambiguities of a society in crisis, but is also characteristic of a society in movement (Zibechi, 2010) that is attempting to overcome crisis. At the same time it depicts a pluralistic society in terms of SSE and social entrepreneurship perceptions and practices. As a concluding remark we should note that after 2010, Greece witnessed a new stream of collective action and cooperativism that is grounded on the principles of the SSE, in contrast to the older patronised and state-fuelled stream of cooperativism found in the farming and agriculture sector. At present, this new trend is small in numbers and small in terms of percentage of GDP, but its emerging impact is obvious in Greek society, and the vast majority of interview and focus group participants believe it has great potential to thrive (see Section 2.5.21).

## **2.5.2 Starting up: age of SSE organisations**

The anecdotal observation that the SSE economy is a relatively new phenomenon in Greece is confirmed by the data, according to which 68 per cent of those SSE organisations responding to the survey have been established in the last five years. Of these, more than 40 per cent have been established in the last three years. Therefore, the majority of the SSE sector in Greece can be categorised as ‘start-up’ or early stage SSE organisations.

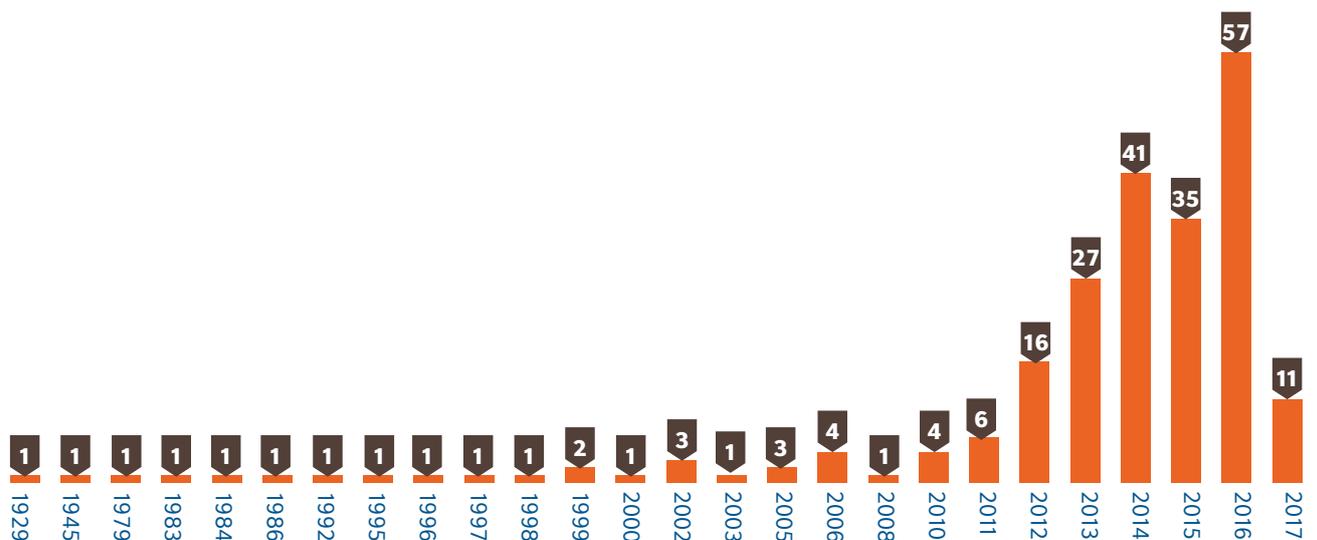
Given the fact that a considerable majority of the survey respondents are entities on the MoL registry (175), these results are not surprising, as more than 90 per cent of those on

<sup>14</sup> Social Enterprises in Greece, meant here as entities that according to the Anglo-American tradition, constitute a sector distinct from both state and market without any reference to its historical dynamics in specific social formations and which is theorised as a response to state (provision of uniform services to diversified needs) and/or market failures (asymmetric information, transaction costs) (Adam, 2016), are not very popular in the country. Apart from the lack of specific legislation about social entrepreneurship, Greece has always been a country offering minimum social services, and most of these have been offered by the state and the municipalities. One could argue that the SSE and social enterprises are overlapping to a great extent in Greece. During the last years incubators and hubs like Impact Hub and Ashoka have tried to differentiate between the SSE and social enterprises and promote social entrepreneurship, but despite the dynamism of the phenomenon it remains significantly smaller in terms of numbers than the development of social cooperative enterprises based on the current legislation around the SSE

the registry are classified as social cooperative enterprises — a legal structure that did not exist before 2011. The survey responses also highlight the number of SSE organisations that have been established since the last meaningful attempt at mapping the number of SSE organisations in Greece (the mapping report published by the European Commission in 2014; see Section 1.5.4), with over 103 organisations being established between 2015 and 2017, after the 2014 report was produced.

According to the interviews and focus group discussions, the fact that the sector has emerged organically and spontaneously, often fuelled by the social movements during the period from 2008 to 2011, presents a challenge, as the development of the SSE sector has been somewhat fragmented and unorganised. Hence it now faces the challenges of maturity. Many of the interviewees believe that the state has a role in helping with the challenges of 're-organisation', although they recognise this cannot be accomplished by the state alone.

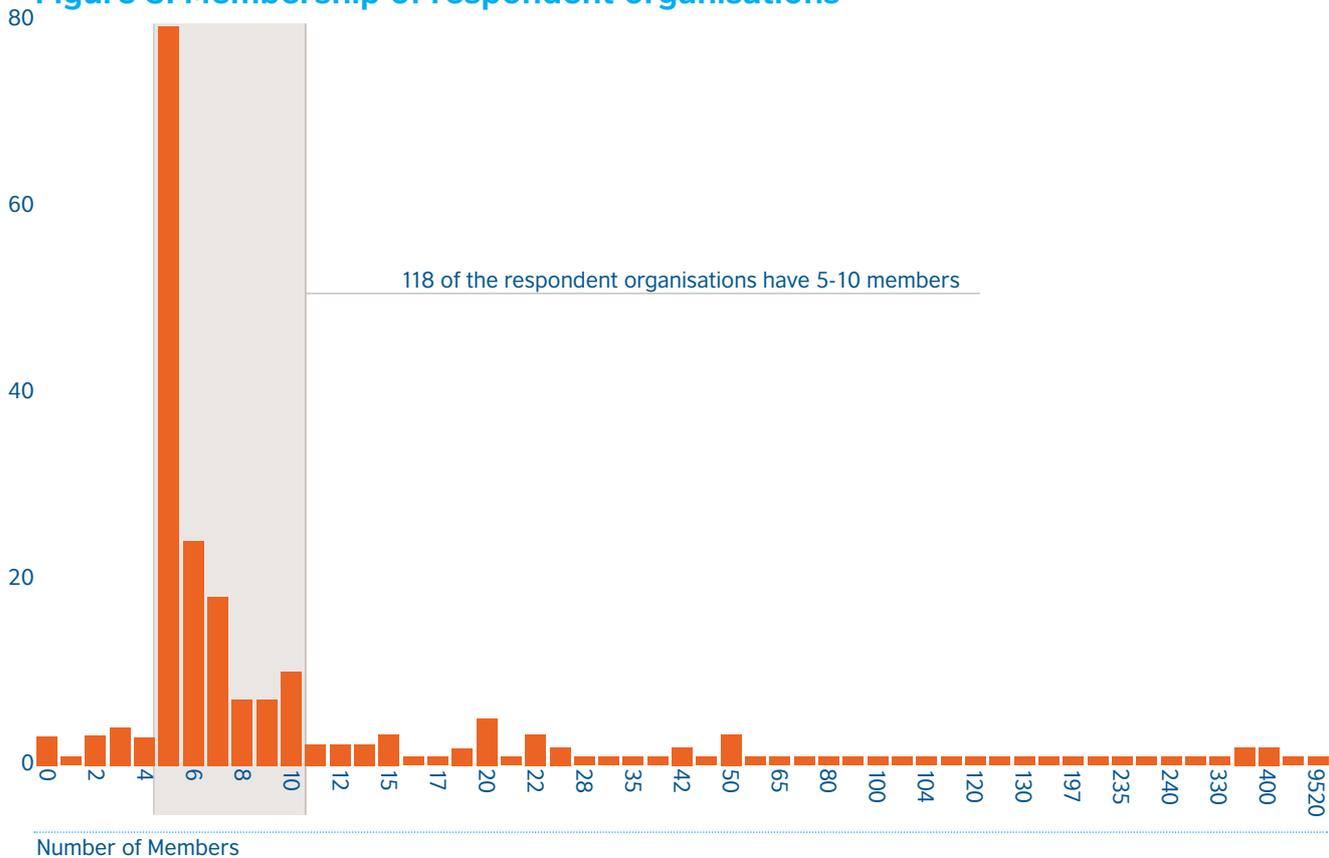
**Figure 2: Starting year of respondent organisations**



### 2.5.3 Number of members

The average membership of the survey respondents is 74 people, although this figure is skewed by a few SSE organisations that have very high membership. Looking at the prevailing values gives a more accurate picture, where the median is five members, and the majority of organisations' members range from five to ten.

**Figure 3: Membership of respondent organisations**



### 2.5.4 Location

More than half of the survey respondents are located in three main areas: Attica (33 per cent), Central Macedonia (13 per cent) and Thessaly (11 per cent). This matches the geographical distribution of SSE organisations presented in previous research. Despite its small geographical size, Thessaly (and the city of Karditsa in particular), has proven to be one of the most significant centres of cooperativism and SSE in Greece.

A detailed overview of the geographical distribution of the survey respondents is presented in Table 9. The table also shows how the data correlates closely with an analysis of the data from the MoL registry.

**Table 9: Geographical distribution of respondent organisations**

	Total number of SSE organisations	Total percentage of SSE organisations	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Attica	80	36%	31%	51%	37%
Central macedonia	32	15%	15%	14%	21%
Thessaly	23	10%	14%	3%	5%
Eastern macedonia	15	7%	9%	6%	0%
Crete	13	6%	6%	6%	5%
Peloponnese	12	5%	4%	6%	5%
South aegean	9	4%	4%	6%	5%
Western greece	8	4%	4%	0%	5%
Epirus	7	3%	4%	0%	0%
Central greece	11	5%	6%	6%	5%
Ionian islands	4	2%	1%	0%	11%
Western macedonia	3	1%	1%	0%	0%
North aegean	3	1%	1%	3%	0%

## 2.5.5 Geographic sphere of operation

The study results confirm that SSE organisations in Greece primarily operate at neighbourhood, local (i.e., community or municipality) or regional levels, or a combination of both. A total of 85 per cent of the respondents operate at least at one of those levels, with 42 per cent operating at the local level (see Table 10 for a complete overview). In line with what might be expected in terms of their scale and maturity, a smaller number operate either nationally and/or internationally, but the numbers are still insignificant. As would be expected, the informal organisations that responded are more likely to operate at the neighbourhood and local levels. Lastly, a number of organisations operate across various geographic spheres — from neighbourhood to international level. Organisations that operate in one of the higher levels are more likely to operate in more than one level.

**Table 10: Respondents organisations’ geographic sphere of operation**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Neighbourhood	13%	8%	16%	35%
Local/provincial	42%	45%	33%	35%
Regional	30%	34%	22%	10%
National	28%	27%	29%	25%
International	21%	19%	29%	15%

## 2.5.6 Organisational characteristics

The most common characteristics of the survey respondents concern democratic governance and decision making processes (60 per cent), the undertaking of trading activity (61 per cent) and the adoption of a defined community/social/environmental goal (46 per cent). A complete overview is presented in Table 11.

As might be expected, a lower percentage of the informal entities undertake trading activity. It is also notable that the percentage of those undertaking trading activity is higher for SSE organisations on the registry (71 per cent), than for those who are not.

Some contradictions were also noted in the responses; notably with 21 per cent of informal organisations saying they have a legal form or formal constitution, and two per cent of those on the registry classifying themselves as an informal group.

**Table 11: Organisational characteristics of respondent organisations**

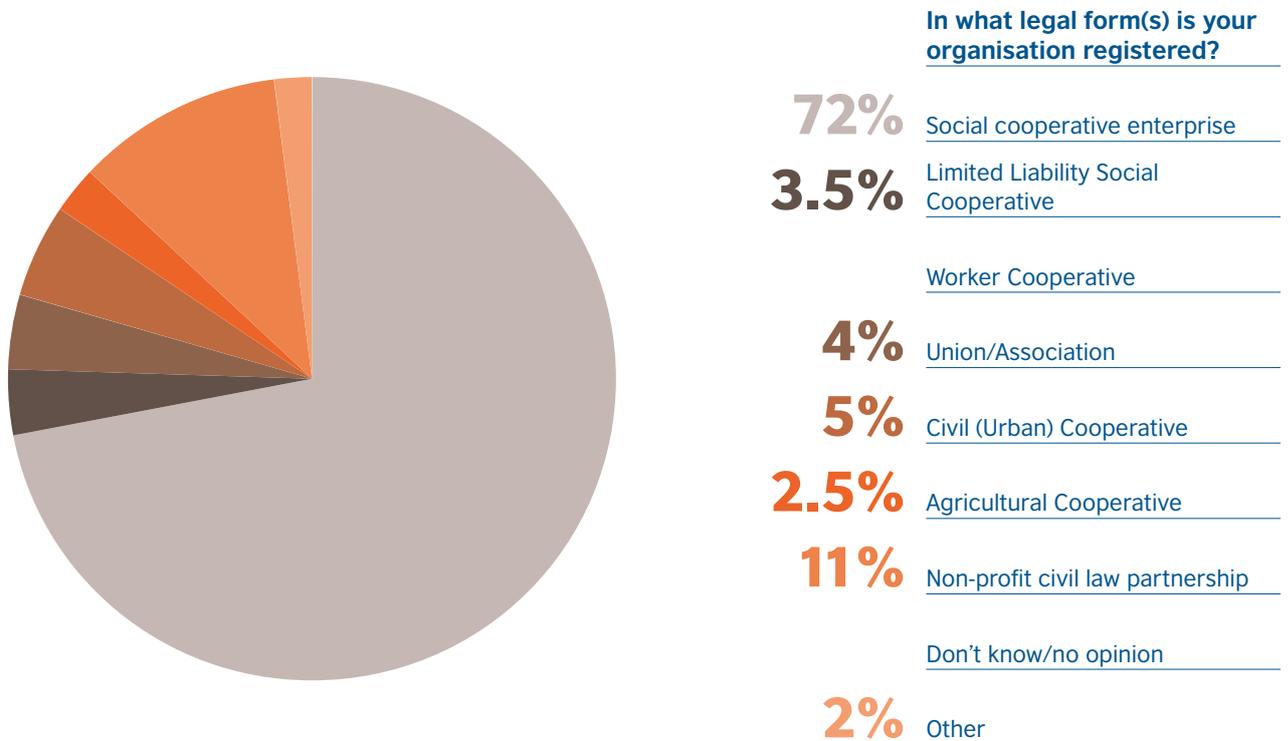
	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Formally constituted/legal form	85%	92%	89%	21%
Trading (selling goods and services for money)	61%	71%	47%	11%
Democratically controlled by its members	60%	60%	62%	58%
Defined community/social/environmental benefit	46%	49%	47%	21%
Rules on limits to profit distribution	42%	47%	38%	5%
Financially independent of the state	35%	29%	47%	58%
Non-monetary transactions	21%	17%	18%	58%
Informal group	8%	2%	0%	79%
Don't know/no opinion	0.5%	0%	2%	0%

## 2.5.7 Types of legal form

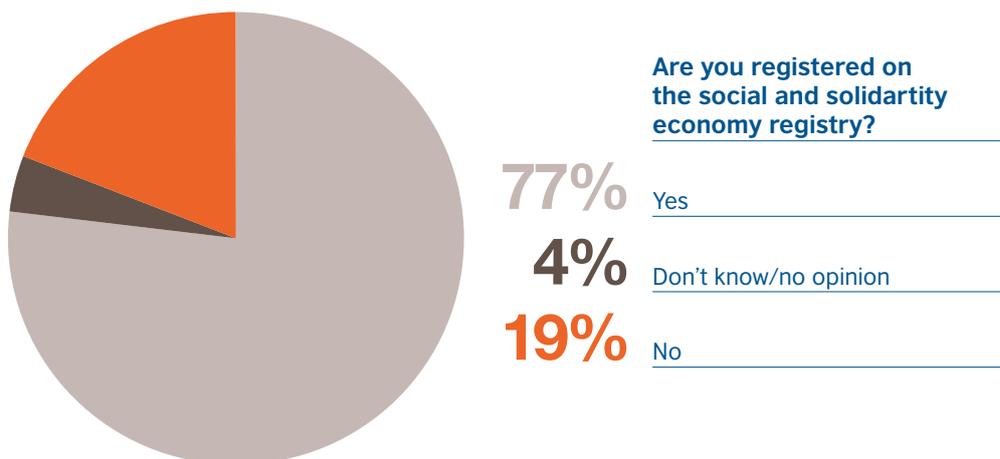
The formal SSE organisations who responded can be divided in seven different sub-categories according to their legal form (see Figure 4). The most common category is Social cooperative enterprises (72 per cent), followed by civil non-profit organisations (11 per cent).

A total of 77 per cent of these entities are on the official MoL registry (see Figure 5). Of those, 90 per cent are social cooperative enterprises and five per cent are limited liability social cooperatives.

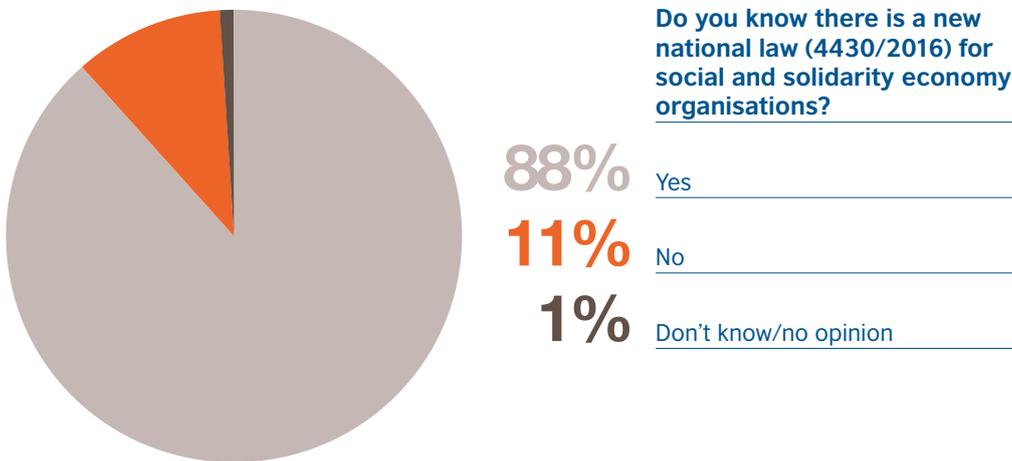
**Figure 4: Legal form of respondent organisations**



**Figure 5: Registered status of respondent organisations with a legal form**



Awareness of law 4430/2016 is high amongst respondents, with 88 per cent stating they are aware of the law. Unsurprisingly, awareness is the highest amongst those on the registry, of whom 95 per cent are aware of the law. It is also interesting to note that awareness levels amongst informal groups (89 per cent) are higher than awareness levels amongst non-registry legal entities (67 per cent). This may imply that some of entities could qualify for the registry but are not aware of it.

**Figure 6: Awareness of law 4430/2016 amongst respondent organisations**

Respondents who had a legal form, but were not on the MoL registry, were asked about why they were not registered. A total of 38 responses were received:

- Don't meet legal requirements: 9
- Recently established/too early: 7
- Unaware of law/process: 7
- Not of interest/no value in current form: 7
- Haven't decided whether to register: 3
- In the process of registering: 2
- No answer given: 1
- Were previously but asked to be removed: 1
- Existed before registry: 1

Although this is clearly a small sample of data, it gives some interesting insight into why organisations decide not to join the registry in its current form.

During the interviews and focus groups, there were some that felt that the 4430/2016 legislation is still too detailed and complicated, and can put people off the SSE as a whole. Most agreed that the 2016 law addressed inconsistencies in previous legislation (such as law 4019/2011) but that there were still some problems to address<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> As one interviewee put it, "the new law tries to defend the public good through the institutionalisation of everything, but it will fail because public good must also be defended through a mechanism that will check the entities and whether they follow the law or not. The current law tries to substitute this mechanism."

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## 2.5.8 Internal operations

When asked to define their main internal operational activities, most respondents put emphasis or priority on democracy and community building both inside and outside of the organisation. This is evident through the fact that 81 per cent take decisions through a general assembly, 73 per cent decide collectively about work and allocation of roles, 75 per cent have an active participatory life, and 63 per cent have regular information meetings for all members.

These findings bear out the hypothesis that the egalitarian and democratic nature of these SSE organisations is strong. In addition, of those trying to create and maintain a sustainable business:

- 45 per cent have a business viability plan
- 34 per cent have internal auditing procedures
- 33 per cent have a mechanism to look for opportunities for growth.

The percentage of non-registry organisations that put emphasis on these three areas is slightly higher than the percentage of those who are registered. This may be associated with the fact that they tend to be longer established as businesses and, therefore, have more established internal operations.

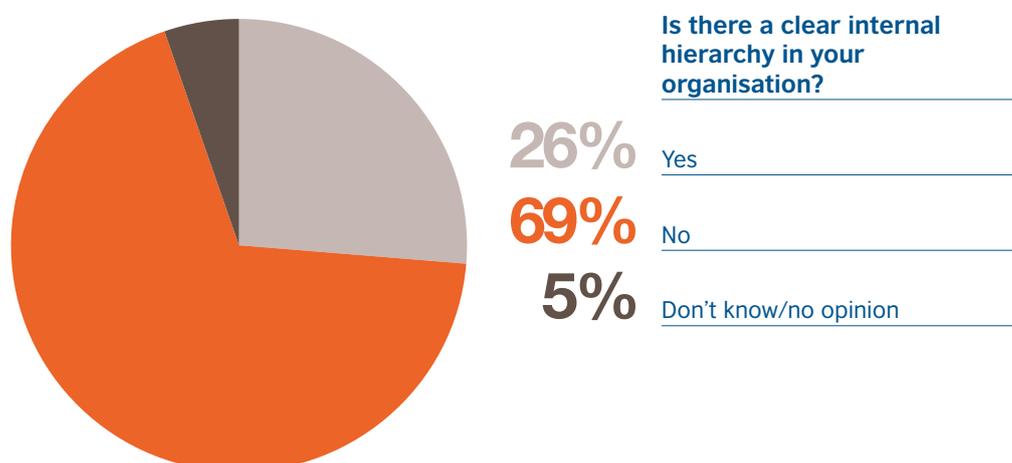
Many are dedicated to democratic practices, and a clear majority take decisions through the board (55 per cent) and/or the general assembly (81 per cent). Although a large number (42 per cent) implement equal pay for equal work, fewer rotate positions of responsibility, accord pay based on criteria or have roles allocated by the person in charge. Interestingly the non-registered organisations with a legal form have slightly higher percentages than SSE registered organisations and informal ones, in decision making by the board or the general assembly.

In terms of hierarchy, 56 per cent of those with a legal form (both registry and non-registry) say they have a clear internal hierarchy, whilst only 26 per cent of informal entities say likewise. The detailed results for internal operations are presented in Table 12.

**Table 12: Internal operations of respondent organisations**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Decision-making by the General Assembly	81%	82%	84%	63%
Participation of members in the life of the organisation	75%	74%	78%	79%
Allocation of roles and work by means of collective decision-making	73%	76%	64%	68%
Actions for the local community	68%	66%	73%	74%
Regular information meetings involving all members of the organisation	63%	66%	56%	63%
Decision-making by the Members of the Board	55%	56%	60%	26%
Training activities	53%	47%	76%	53%
Business viability plan for the organisation	45%	47%	51%	11%
Equal pay for equal work	42%	47%	33%	21%
Internal auditing procedures	34%	32%	47%	16%
Research mechanism of opportunities for development of the organisation	33%	32%	40%	21%
Rotation in positions of responsibilities	25%	23%	33%	16%
Allocation of roles by the person in charge/Director	21%	19%	27%	21%
Evaluation mechanism of the organisation's viability	15%	12%	31%	0%
Pay according to criteria (specialisation, years of experience, special needs)	11%	12%	13%	5%

**Figure 7: Internal hierarchy of respondent organisations with a legal form**



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The results of the interviews and focus groups revealed that, probably due to the young age of the sector and the lack of tradition of cooperation in the country, internal communication is at many times problematic, and decision-making processes can be time-consuming and ineffective. In addition, many interviewees and focus group participants mentioned the lack of awareness and a lack of knowledge about the field as one of the main barriers for setting up a successful entity.

The majority of respondent SSE organisations have not developed specific tools for decision making or conflict resolution, apart from the generic role that general assemblies can have in this process. Focus group participants mentioned that conflict resolution mechanisms are particularly weak in the majority of cases, albeit with some notable exceptions. One such example from Karditsa involves a series of 27 seminars and workshops taking place for participants from SSE organisations in order to foster communication and collaboration skills. This reveals both the maturity of the eco-system in Karditsa and also the immaturity of eco-systems in other parts of the country.

Participants elsewhere asked for more targeted support and learning to develop these skills and tools: support from the SSE organisations themselves, their networks, municipal authorities and the state. They mentioned, however, the failure of some previous state efforts to set up such mechanisms because “they were targeting unemployed people primarily that were indifferent for learning about SSE and they were simply going to the seminars because they were receiving some kind of compensation in order to participate”.

## **2.5.9 Organisational objectives**

SSE organisations have a social purpose or social objective they are seeking to meet, and often pursue multiple objectives. The most commonly stated social objective amongst respondents was to create employment opportunities (75 per cent of respondents), followed by promoting another model for work, supporting vulnerable people and promoting societal change. Environmental protection also ranks highly.

It is evident that employment creation is of a particular focus for those SSE organisations on the registry, and 84 per cent of those organisations stated it as one of their overall social objectives. This strong emphasis on employment and job creation almost certainly derives from the current broader economic and employment situation in Greece, and on the historical focus of social cooperatives on these issues.

**Table 13: Organisational objectives of respondent organisations**

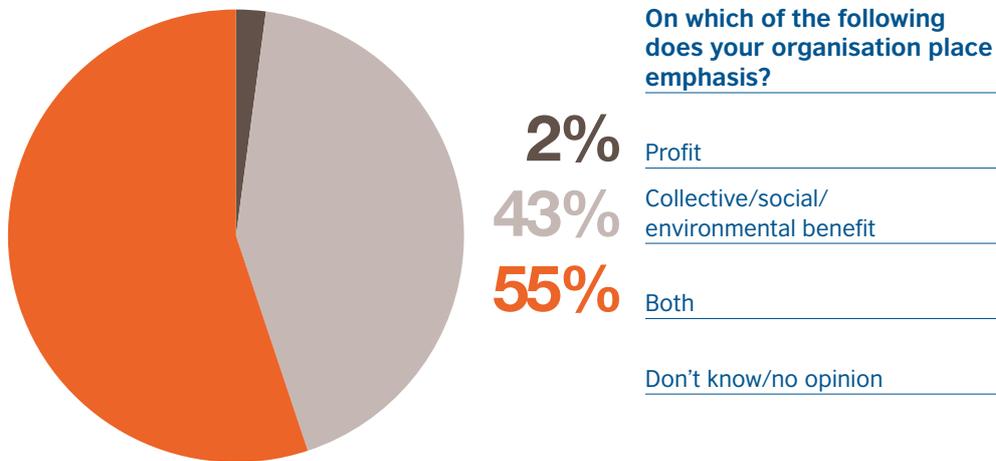
	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Creating employment opportunities (including for members)	74%	84%	58%	37%
Promoting societal change	50%	47%	56%	58%
Supporting vulnerable people	48%	47%	49%	58%
Protecting the environment	48%	50%	42%	42%
Promoting another model for work	44%	47%	38%	32%
Providing access to quality products/services at fair prices	41%	44%	42%	21%
Addressing financial exclusion	40%	39%	38%	53%
Supporting other Social and Solidarity Economy organisations	35%	37%	40%	5%
Fighting inequalities	33%	31%	38%	37%
Improving a particular community	32%	30%	29%	53%
Improving health and wellbeing	31%	29%	33%	37%
Promoting education and literacy	26%	27%	16%	42%
Strengthening women's position/gender equality	23%	23%	27%	16%
Other	12%	10%	18%	16%
Providing affordable housing	3%	3%	2%	5%

What is also clear is that many of the respondents are seeking to balance the commercial and the social aspects of their work, more than half place an emphasis on achieving *both* profit and collective social benefit. This is strongest amongst those entities on the registry (with 63 per cent of those organisations saying they emphasise both) than those who are not (only 30 per cent). Virtually none only emphasise profit.

Moreover, it is worth noting that the average organisation has chosen more than five distinct objectives. This is another indication showing the multiple and ample social characteristics that Greek SSE organisations have.

Interestingly, although we correlated statistically the different organisations with respect to women's participation in them, we did not find any significant association between the percentage of women's participation and the objectives chosen. Even with regard to the choice of strengthening women's position/gender equality, it seems that it has been equally selected by all groups no matter what the total representation of women is in each group. This can be partially explained by the fact that the survey was completed only by one person and therefore has a limited capacity to reflect the inner differences within each organisation, which is an issue for future research.

**Figure 8: Emphasis on profit vs social benefit amongst respondent organisations**



In relation to organisational objectives, the results of the interviews and focus groups revealed that having a clear ideological purity and purpose can be a strengthening factor in some ventures, but a weakening factor in others. For example, it can be a strengthening factor in organisations with hierarchies and fewer leaders (entities with legal form that do not meet the democratic criteria of an SSE organisation according to Greek law) but can become a source of conflict within organisations that involve more people (informal groups of individuals).

## 2.5.10 Sectors

Amongst the respondents with a legal form, the most common sectors of activity are food trade and processing, education and leisure. These are followed by social care, recycling and tourism. Other economic sectors have relatively low representation. See Table 14 for a complete overview. These results correlate with findings in existing research. The results also add to the anecdotal evidence that suggests the social economy in Greece is mainly concerned with food service and restaurants, as this sector is considered a relatively safe way to make a living for short periods of time. However, the data below also demonstrates the diversity and range of SSE organisations in Greece, who operate across many different industries and sectors.

It may be of interest that a higher proportion of those who operate in the social care sector are not on the registry (18 per cent of non-registered organisations, compared to just eight per cent of those on the registry).

It's important to note that only entities with a legal form were asked about their sectors of activity, as the informal organisations that participated in the study were not established enough to have a clear understanding of specific industry sectors.

**Table 14: Main sector of activity for respondent organisations with a legal form**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations
Education, culture and leisure	17%	19%	11%
Food trade and processing	17%	17%	16%
Social care	8%	5%	18%
Tourism services	7%	6%	7%
Environmental (recycling, reuse)	6%	6%	5%
Business support and consultancy	5%	4%	9%
Hospitality services (cafes, restaurants)	5%	5%	5%
Technology, communication (web, design, print)	5%	5%	2%
Agriculture and livestock farming	4%	4%	5%
Health care and health services	3%	3%	0%
Financial support and services	3%	3%	2%
Cleaning services	2%	3%	0%
Childcare	2%	3%	0%
Transport	1%	1%	0%
Other (various)	17%	16%	20%

### 2.5.11 Annual turnover and business optimism

Most of the respondents with a legal form have a very small annual turnover, with 54 per cent saying they have a turnover of under €10,000, while only 15 per cent have a turnover of above €100,000. This reflects the relatively young and local nature of these SSE organisations as a whole. When taking into account the fact that many of these organisations have members to employ on such a small annual turnover, it also demonstrates that many of these organisations could soon be struggling to sustain their membership.

It is also worth noting that 32 per cent of those not on the MoL registry have a turnover over €100,000, compared to just nine per cent of those who are registered. Potential reasons for this could be the short operation period of the more recently established SSE organisations (post 2011 legislation) and the focus of a significant percentage solely on collective, social and environmental benefit, as explained in section 2.5.10.

Informal entities were not asked about their annual turnover, as few keep financial records.

**Table 15: Respondent organisations' annual turnover (last financial year)**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations
0 - €10,000	54%	55%	51%
€10,000 - €20,000	10%	12%	2%
€20,000 - €30,000	4%	4%	2%
€30,000 - €40,000	3%	3%	0%
€40,000 - €50,000	3%	4%	0%
€50,000 - €100,000	8%	9%	2%
€100,000 - €150,000	4%	4%	2%
€150,000 - €200,000	3%	1%	9%
€200,000 - €250,000	0%	0%	0%
€250,000 - €300,000	1%	1%	0%
€300,000 - €350,000	2%	0%	7%
€350,000 - €400,000	1%	1%	0%
€450,000 - €500,000	1%	1%	2%
€500,000 - €1M	2%	0%	7%
€1M - €5M	1%	1%	0%
Over €5M	1%	0%	5%

Nevertheless, the majority of respondents are optimistic about their future with 68 per cent expecting their annual turnover to grow over the next 12 months (see Table 16 below). This is encouraging, in that most have growth aspirations, but it also reflects the broader immaturity of the sector — most start-ups expect to grow.

**Table 16: Respondent organisations' expectations about future growth of annual turnover**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations
Turnover to increase	68%	70%	61%
Turnover to decrease	8%	6%	14%
Turnover to stay the same	14%	13%	16%
Don't know/no opinion	10%	11%	9%

## 2.5.12 Financial surplus

Only a very small number of the organisations that responded to the survey have surplus to use — only 20 per cent made a surplus, while 42 per cent broke even and 31 per cent had a deficit. This is, again, most probably related to the early-stage nature of many of these organisations, although it could also reveal the need for more substantive commercial business support and advice.

Those that do manage to make some surplus, usually choose to re-invest it back into the organisation, either towards its objective or to create extra jobs. A smaller percentage of those not on the registry made a loss (20 per cent), compared to those on the registry (34 per cent).

**Table 17: Profit vs loss amongst respondent organisations with a legal form (last financial year)**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations
Made a profit/surplus	21%	22%	16%
Made a loss	31%	34%	20%
Broke even	42%	39%	50%
Don't know/no opinion	7%	5%	14%

**Table 18: How respondent organisations with a legal form use financial surplus (last financial year)**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations
Job creation	37%	38%	33%
Investment	30%	32%	21%
Distribution to employees	6%	8%	0%
Distribution to members	3%	3%	2%
Support to other SSE organisations	3%	3%	5%
Don't know/no opinion	5%	5%	5%
Other	16%	11%	33%

## 2.5.13 Sources of income and partnerships

Identifying sources of income is a key issue for any SSE organisation. Most of the SSE organisations on the MoL registry and the non-registered entities with a legal form who responded source their income from trading, while many of the informal organisations survive on donations and members' contributions. Overall, trading with the general public (33 per cent of respondents) and trading with the private sector (29 per cent of respondents) are the key sources of income. Trading with the public sector was a significantly lower source of income, with registered SSE organisations being the only organisation type to state this as their main income source (14 per cent). Income through grants is a relatively small proportion by comparison, and these are more likely to come from independent sources, rather than the government.

**Table 19: Respondent organisations' main source of income**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Trading with the general public	33%	36%	30%	16%
Trading with the private sector	29%	34%	20%	11%
Trading with the public sector	9%	14%	0%	0%
Trading internationally	3%	2%	2%	16%
Trading with SSE organisations	1%	1%	2%	0%
Grants from the private sector (e.g. SSR and philanthropy grants, donations from other organisations)	6%	3%	11%	21%
Grants from local government	1%	0%	7%	0%
Grants from the state	1%	1%	0%	0%
Other grants	11%	5%	20%	32%
Don't know/no opinion	4%	3%	7%	5%

SSE organisations tend to partner with a wide variety of organisations on a range of activities beyond just income generation. Amongst the survey respondents, the most popular type of partner organisations were municipalities and regions (chosen by 58 per cent of respondents), followed by civil society organisations (53 per cent of respondents) and universities (46 per cent of respondents). This reflects the fact that, although most trading is done with the general public and private sector, a lot of other important partnership work is done with local government, civil society and education institutions. It is also worth noting that 28 per cent of SSE organisations said they collaborate with international organisations, which aligns closely with the percentage of organisations who say they work internationally (see Section 2.5.6).

A higher proportion of the respondents not on the MoL registry are more likely to have partnered with municipalities, civil society organisations, universities and international organisations. This may reflect the fact that they are more established and have a larger capacity than those on the registry, and could indicate a greater dynamism in the range of activities they undertake. As might be expected, informal entities tend to interact mostly with other civil society organisations, and less so with formal institutions.

**Table 20: The kinds of organisations that respondent organisations partner with**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Regions/municipalities	58%	56%	71%	42%
Civil society organisations	53%	49%	62%	63%
Universities	46%	41%	67%	32%
International organisations	28%	23%	49%	21%
Professional associations	18%	19%	16%	21%
Other	14%	14%	16%	11%
Trade associations	13%	13%	11%	16%
Trade unions	6%	4%	9%	11%
Don't know/no opinion	5%	5%	4%	5%

## 2.5.14 Finance and funding

Aside from generating their own income, SSE organisations can receive different types of funding and finance. Amongst the respondents, the main sources of funding were for particular projects or actions, or from donations relating to their overall objectives (many of the responses included in the 'Other (various)' category in Table 21 account for these two sources of funding). Interestingly, in-kind resources also featured as a common source of funding. The number of donations and in-kind resources arguably demonstrate the solidarity present in the Greek context, but access to other forms of finance may be needed to help SSE organisations be sustainable, and to grow and thrive in the future (for example, investment in the form of loans or mortgages is a relatively small source of finance in comparison).

However, our secondary analysis based on correlations show that the majority of the donations given for the overall objectives of the projects go to the organisations based in Attica. More than 37 per cent of the organisations in Attica have received some form of donation and more than 65 per cent of the overall donations are given to them. It can be potentially explained through the better networking opportunities that those organisations may have access to.

**Table 21: Sources of finance and funding received by respondent organisations with a legal form**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations
Other (various)	37%	40%	29%
Grant for a specific project/action	26%	21%	43%
Donation related to the overall objectives of the organisation	21%	15%	40%
In-kind resources	18%	17%	21%
Equity	10%	11%	7%
Don't know/no opinion	9%	9%	10%
Loan	7%	6%	12%
Mortgage	1%	1%	2%
Overdraft	1%	1%	0%

## 2.5.15 Number of employees

The vast majority of survey respondents have less than ten employees, with the highest percentage of organisations (30 per cent) employing two to four people. This is directly proportionate and aligned with the turnover of these organisations (see Section 2.5.12), and highlights the relative immaturity of SSE organisations on the MoL registry. This is also reflected in the fact that a larger proportion of organisations not on the registry have ten or more employees (18 per cent), compared to those on the registry (nine per cent).

**Table 22: Total number of employees at respondent organisations with a legal form**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations
1	20%	21%	16%
2-4	30%	33%	22%
5-9	16%	14%	22%
10-25	7%	7%	5%
26-49	4%	2%	8%
50-99	1%	0%	5%
100-249	0%	0%	0%
250-499	0%	0%	0%
500+	0%	0%	0%
Don't know/no opinion	22%	23%	22%

This survey data correlates strongly with employee data from the annual reports received via the MoL registry, which shows 159 organisations (of 288) have zero employees. A breakdown of the employee numbers of the remaining 131 is shown in Table 23.

**Table 23: Number of employees at SSE organisations on the MoL registry (organisations with more than zero employees)**

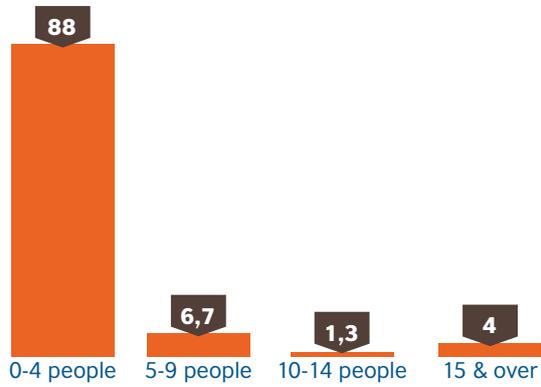
	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations
1	28%
2-4	30%
5-9	20%
10-25	17%
26-49	3%
50-99	1%
100-249	0%
250-499	0%
500+	0%

For 47 per cent of employees at respondent organisations, their employment in the SSE organisations is their main source of income, which suggests that a majority of employees are not earning enough to sustain themselves given the low turnover of these organisations. This is also reflected in the levels of part-time employment. Key data are presented in Figures 9-11 below.

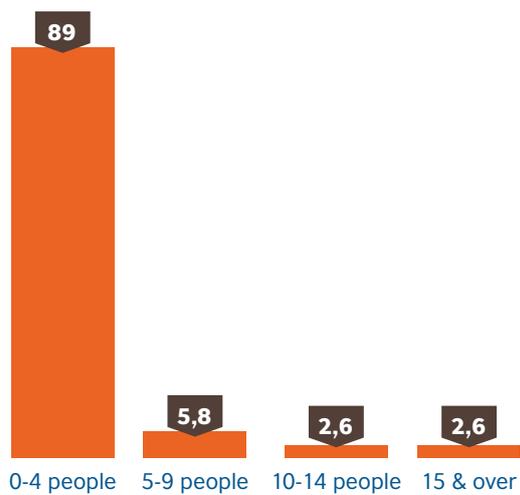
A key issue relating to employment discussed during the interviews and focus groups is commitment. The fact that the previous law gave SSE organisations the right to operate without employees and only with members, had both positive and negative effects. While it allowed individuals to set up business and to try new forms of social entrepreneurship collectively many of those cooperatives became or remained as complementary activities for many participants, who did not commit to them but participated in their free time. This highlights the problem that people may be less inclined to invest time and resources in a project that does not provide a salary and, consequently, the project remains peripheral or even closes. This could make sense for more informal entities, but it is not ideal for those seeking to establish a stable organisation and to see it evolve over time.

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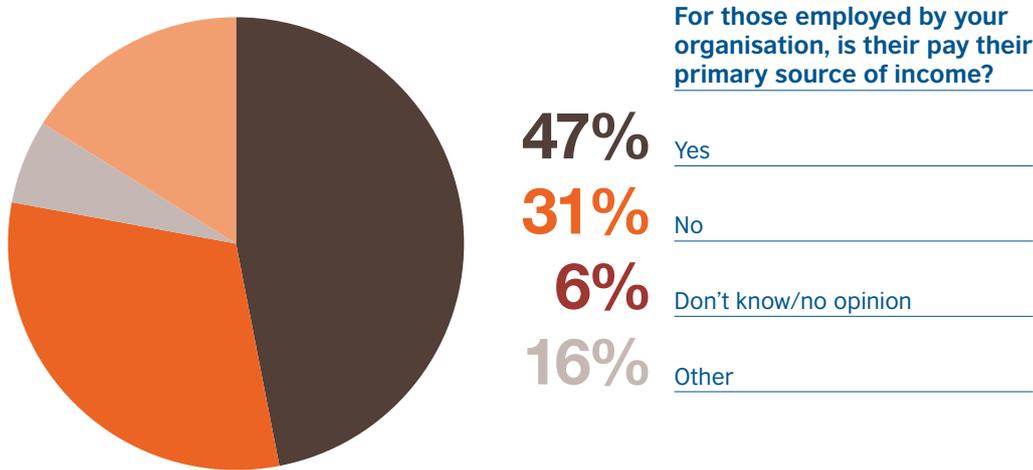
**Figure 9: Number of part-time employees at respondent organisations with a legal form**



**Figure 10: Number of full-time employees at respondent organisations with a legal form**



**Figure 11: Number of employees at respondent organisations with a legal form whose primary source of income is SSE organisation**



In line with the optimism about increasing turnover, a clear majority of respondent organisations anticipate increasing their number of employees in the next 12 months.

**Table 24: Expectation of how employee numbers will change over the next 12 months amongst respondent organisations with a legal form**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations
More than currently	64%	65%	59%
The same	24%	22%	30%
Less than currently	4%	4%	5%
Don't know/no opinion	8%	8%	5%

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## 2.5.16 Employment of women

According to our survey, the average employment of women amongst SSE organisations is larger and more prevalent than in the mainstream economy and business. Indeed, 27 per cent of the respondents have a workforce in which women make up more than 60 per cent of the total. These findings are also aligned with circumstantial evidence from the field that talks about cooperativism being a women-centred sector. For context, it is worthwhile comparing these figures to the national total workforce, where women make up 42 per cent of employees (ELSTAT, 2016).

**Table 25: Women employees as a percentage of the total workforce at respondent organisations**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
0% to 20%	16%	19%	11%	11%
20% to 40%	25%	23%	24%	42%
40% to 60%	19%	19%	22%	16%
Over 60%	27%	24%	35%	26%
Don't know/no opinion	13%	16%	8%	5%

## 2.5.17 Beneficiaries

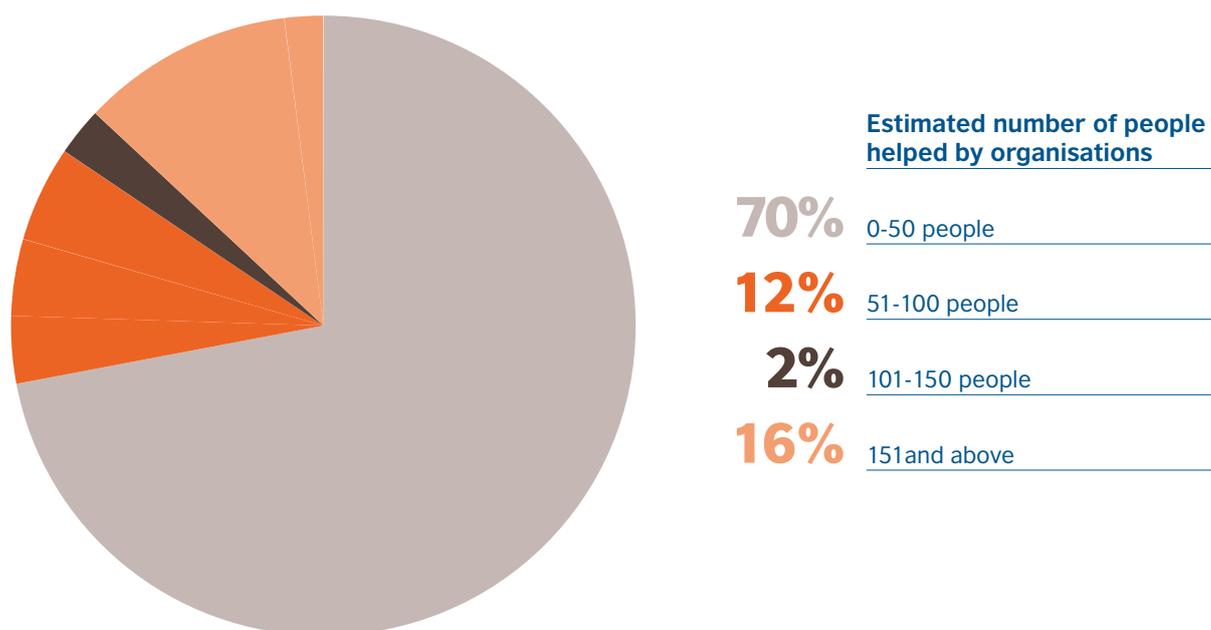
As shown in Section 2.5.10, close to 75 per cent of respondents are aiming to tackle employment challenges in Greece. This aligns with the types of beneficiaries these organisations are targeting, with 55 per cent targeting the long-term unemployed, followed by older people, those with insecure housing, refugees and asylum seekers. While 70 per cent of organisations are currently only reaching an estimated 50 people, 30 per cent already have a significant scale of impact (see Figure 12).

It is interesting to note that informal groups are more likely to support refugees and the homeless.

**Table 26: Types of beneficiaries targeted by respondent organisations**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Long-term unemployed	55%	56%	51%	59%
Other	25%	22%	32%	35%
Older people	20%	19%	22%	24%
Individuals with a physical disability	18%	19%	15%	18%
Individuals with a learning or mental disability	17%	18%	17%	12%
Refugees and asylum-seekers	14%	11%	17%	29%
Homeless or people in insecure housing	13%	9%	22%	24%
Don't know/no opinion	13%	13%	12%	12%
Domestic violence victims	10%	9%	12%	12%
Individuals with addiction problems (alcohol, drugs)	8%	7%	5%	18%
People coming out of offending	7%	7%	5%	12%
Young people with delinquent behaviour	6%	8%	0%	6%
Trafficking victims	3%	2%	2%	6%

**Figure 12: Estimated number of beneficiaries reached by respondent organisations**



## 2.5.18 Leadership

Amongst respondent organisations, 65 per cent of the leaders are male, which is lower percentage than in mainstream businesses (recent Grant Thornton data puts the percentage of male mainstream leaders at nearly 80 per cent). Percentage of female leaders in the SSE sector is, therefore, more aligned with other European countries where we can observe a similarly higher proportion of female leaders. The percentage of women leaders across the three organisation types is:

- REGISTRY organisations: 33 per cent women leaders
- NON-REGISTRY organisations: 38 per cent women leaders
- INFORMAL organisations: 18 per cent women leaders.

It is worthwhile noting that, although levels of women's employment within the SSE sector are higher than in mainstream businesses, this is yet to translate proportionately to women leadership roles (even though the total percentage of women leaders — 35 per cent — is higher than the 20 per cent within mainstream businesses).

With regard to level of education, 41 per cent of leaders have achieved a postgraduate/doctoral level, with a similar number having graduated from higher education. This high level of education is comparable across all three types of organisation.

**Table 27: Education level of the leaders of respondent organisations**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Postgraduate/doctoral studies	41%	37%	54%	41%
Higher education graduate	38%	41%	35%	24%
Vocational training school	3%	5%	0%	0%
Upper secondary education/ technical school	14%	16%	4%	18%
Lower secondary education	2%	1%	4%	0%
Primary education	1%	0%	0%	6%
None of the above	1%	0%	0%	6%
Don't know/no opinion	2%	0%	4%	6%

There is no obvious pattern with regard to the of age of leaders, although it is worthwhile noting there are very few leaders below 24 or above 60.

**Table 28: Age of leaders of respondent organisations**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
16-24	1%	1%	0%	6%
25-44	47%	48%	48%	35%
45-64	49%	48%	50%	53%
65+	2%	1%	2%	0%
Don't know/no opinion	2%	1%	0%	6%

A quarter of leaders come from vulnerable groups, which bears out that many social entrepreneurs have a 'biographical' experience of the problem they seek to address. This is comparable across the different types of organisations.

**Table 29: Vulnerable group status of leaders of respondent organisations**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Yes	25%	25%	27%	24%
No	72%	72%	71%	71%
Don't know/no opinion	3%	3%	2%	6%

## 2.5.19 Networking

Networking in this case refers to the networks of organisations and support structures that SSE organisations can access and make use of. SSE organisations in Greece seem to be moderately connected to each other, and also to broader national and international networks. A total of 46 per cent participate in some form of network.

What they gain from that varies widely, but includes knowledge, information and learning from others. Surprisingly, few gain a specific business benefit, such as business advice (three per cent) or economic and business growth (seven per cent). This may indicate that, while existing networks are clearly providing some benefit, they are primarily about information sharing and learning, rather than opportunities, personal support or practical advice.

**Table 30: Participation in networks amongst respondent organisations**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Yes	46%	45%	52%	39%
No	51%	52%	45%	56%
Don't know/ no opinion	2%	2%	2%	6%

**Table 31: View of respondents organisations on the benefits of participating in networks**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Learning from other SSE organisations	27%	30%	18%	28%
Access to useful information	20%	22%	13%	17%
Learning from other organisations	12%	10%	20%	17%
Visibility/promoting supporting policies	10%	9%	18%	6%
Personal support and relationships	7%	5%	13%	11%
Economic and business growth	7%	9%	5%	0%
Business advice	3%	1%	3%	11%
Don't know/no opinion	5%	6%	5%	0%
Other (specify)	8%	8%	8%	11%

The focus groups and interviews revealed that 'networking' can mean different things to different SSE organisations. In this case, networking has a multidimensional and diverse role amongst the different SSE organisations who participated. For more informal entities, the most valuable aspects of networking are the flow of information and the exchange of

learning and experiences. For more established organisations (and those less interested in the political dimension of the SSE), networks with practical business outcomes are of more relevance. While for those seeking to work in collaboration, networking is about social capital and cooperation skills. In Karditsa, for example, networking involves not only information flows, but specific seminars on cooperation, business networking, managerial networking and networking in relation to finance through the local cooperative bank.

The various forms of 'networking' to emerge from the focus groups and interviews can be grouped as follows:

- Information flow and exchange of experiences, which can lead to collaboration (for example the festival of cooperative and solidarity economy)
- Development of alternative processes and procedures, including alternative tools for independent finance (for example, the Network of Cooperative Ventures in Athens)
- Practical networks between organisations in a similar economic field, with less political elements (for example, the European Network of Energy Cooperatives)
- Deeper networks supporting social capital and cooperation skills, as well as finance and information flows (for example, the mature eco-system in Karditsa)
- Practical business networks for those with less of an interest in cooperativism or political dimensions, but who are focused on sharing knowledge around business models and business plans.

## 2.5.20 Potential for and barriers to growth

As the SSE has only recently developed in Greece, its actual impact is relatively small, despite the dynamic way in which it has emerged. This dynamism is reflected in the optimism of the survey respondents; as we have already seen, they anticipate an increase in turnover and workforce in the year ahead. When asked specifically about growth, 90 per cent expect their organisation to grow in the next year, and virtually the same proportion think there is potential for the SSE to grow in their economic sector and/or geographical region. In the region, those entities not on the MoL registry are most positive of all (98 per cent see potential in their region, compared to 88 per cent of those registered).

This is encouraging and demonstrates the potential for policy and practice to boost the SSE organisations in Greece.

Following high percentages for expected growth, our secondary correlation statistical analysis show that a series of factors that could affect this widespread optimism, actually do not play any important role in the responses. The majority of the SSE organisations expect to grow in the year ahead no matter what their previous year's economic performance, geography or scale of operation. Those who expect to grow economically also foresee a growth in their membership. Furthermore, the different barriers for growth that they experience seem to not substantially affect their initial optimism. Although they do agree that the right policies are critical in boosting SSE, it seems through our analysis that a high percent of the responders anticipate growth even with the current legislation. What is important to mention though, despite the small numbers of the respondents that do not foresee growth for their organisation, is that the most important barriers that they identify are related to finance, government regulations, lack of awareness and lack of cash flow.

**Table 32: Respondent organisations' view on whether their organisation will grow within the next 12 months**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Yes	90%	93%	85%	79%
No	4%	4%	7%	5%
Don't know /no opinion	5%	4%	7%	16%

It is worth noting that while survey respondents were largely optimistic about growth, many interview and focus group participants initially viewed the idea of growth with some scepticism. This is not about not wanting to develop their ventures or the SSE sector, but because they are often opposed to the mainstream model of economic growth in its simplest form. Many have a vision of a society with smaller throughput and a slower pace of life, rather than a fast-growth, economically-driven model. They do, however, believe SSE has the potential to become the pathway for broader societal transformation, and their scepticism does not mean they don't wish to develop their organisations or the broader sector; in fact, the opposite is true, as explained below.

Mirroring the optimism of the survey respondents, the vast majority of participants antic-

ipate that the SSE in Greece will grow substantially in the coming years, for a number of reasons:

- There is a set of social services that state can no longer offer to the extent required. The gap will either need to be filled by the private sector (although this could be very expensive) or through SSE organisations.
- The SSE organisations are active in a number of sectors that tend to be labour intensive and not capital intensive, which is important for the reduction of unemployment.
- The decline of the ‘family business’ model opens the space for the SSE to expand.
- The collapse of finance in the private sector, also affects SSE organisations on the one hand, but it can also be viewed as an opportunity for developing alternative forms of finance.
- Cooperative entities can be very effective in sharing costs and bureaucratic-administrative work that prevents people from setting up new business.
- SSE can empower and be empowered by local communities. Moreover SSE organisations can better understand local problems and provide innovative ways to resolve them.
- Acting in common can be very fulfilling and can improve individual, collective and social well-being.
- New social movements are deeply linked with the SSE, and interacting with these can be a significant factor in further developing the SSE.
- The improvements brought in with law 4430/2016 could facilitate development of the SSE.

**Table 33: Respondent organisations’ view on whether SSE growth will happen in their sector**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Yes	91%	89%	98%	89%
No	5%	7%	0%	5%
Don't know/ no opinion	4%	4%	2%	5%

The most popular choices amongst interview and workshop participants when asked in which sectors they thought SSE growth was most likely to happen included:

- Agricultural production and processing of agricultural products
- Alternative tourism, including ecotourism
- Energy production, renewable energy and community-owned energy
- Waste management and recycling
- Services with and for vulnerable people
- Management of the commons (canals, land, forests, fisheries, etc.).

This broadly resonates with previous research<sup>16</sup> that indicates that the SSE movement in Greece is focused on relaunching economic activity in collective and fairer ways, more than it seeks to offer services with a particular social focus. Many felt that the SSE, therefore, was a potential route for the reorganisation of the economy, as opposed to a ‘complementary’ sector to the mainstream. In that sense, the sectors in which future growth may happen are potentially limitless — according to several focus group participants.

Most participants had no clear view on whether their region was particularly advantaged or disadvantaged in terms of growth potential. The exception to this were the participants in Karditsa, who have a strong sense that the infrastructure and social capital around cooperation they have built up will help in the future, particularly with supporting new entities. This may indicate a need for more in-depth research on the geographical strengths and weaknesses in the country, to generate a deeper understanding of why some areas flourish more than others and how differing needs can best be addressed.

In terms of planning for achieving growth within the next 12 months, most survey respondents stated that they are prioritising either product and service development (31 per cent), expanding existing work (22 per cent), attracting new customers and clients (21 per cent) or diversifying into new markets (ten per cent). This can be interpreted as a wish to innovate, to develop work and to grow by gaining with new supporters and customers.

It is interesting to note that, despite finance being seen as the biggest barrier to growth (see Table 38), few are seeking to attract investment or finance in order to expand, and this could be because of availability and access.

**Table 34: Respondent organisations’ plans for achieving growth within the next 12 months**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations
Developing new products and services	31%	29%	40%
Replicating or spreading work	22%	22%	23%
Attracting new customers or clients	20%	23%	11%
Diversifying into new markets	10%	11%	6%
Expanding into new geographic areas	7%	7%	6%
Attracting investment or finance to expand	4%	4%	6%
Other	2%	1%	6%
Increasing sales with existing customers	1%	2%	0%
Merging with another organisation	1%	2%	0%
Winning business as part of a consortium	1%	0%	3%
Don't know/no opinion	0%	0%	0%

The majority of survey respondents don’t believe that public policies are contributing to the development of SSE organisations, which may reflect broader challenges in the economy, as well as a wish for the government to do more.

16 See Adam’s research, 2014

**Table 35: Respondent organisations' view on whether public policies are contributing to the development of SSE organisations**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Yes	42%	42%	40%	44%
No	53%	52%	57%	44%
Don't know/no opinion	6%	6%	2%	11%

These results correlate with the feedback from the interview and focus group participants, who generally all agreed that state policies are not very successful at promoting and facilitating the growth of the SSE thus far. More specifically, participants highlighted key areas that were particularly challenging and that could be improved:

- Bureaucracy was raised as a major barrier in almost every focus group and interview that was conducted. In general, this was a comment on the need for too much paperwork involved in establishing and running a new organisation.
- More information about financial tools and checking mechanisms in the law, and incentives for networking were also called for. Several participants said that law 4430/2016 does not offer enough incentives for networking or access to appropriate financial tools.
- The MoL registry only being located in Athens is problematic for those SSE organisations in other parts of the country (some have had to visit personally after not being able to successfully register by phone). Digitisation would help reduce costs for all concerned.
- A lack of awareness about the SSE amongst other state agencies and ministries means they cannot contribute to or support as they might be able to otherwise. This correlates to some of the findings identified in previous research, in which inconsistencies and barriers are created by lack of joined-up and communication between different ministries <sup>17</sup>.
- A lack of mechanisms for communication between SSE networks and collectives and the state is also a big barrier.

In terms of the broader factors that can hinder the growth of SSE organisations, 64 per cent of survey respondents identify the ability to access appropriate finance as the main barrier. This is reflected in the fact that the main barriers faced by individual organisations are finance-related (see Table 36), and is a view more common amongst organisations on the MoL registry (74 per cent). Poor commissioning and procurement from the public sector is also viewed as a major barrier, which may highlight another area for the government to seek reforms.

17 See policy recommendations of Adam, for example

**Table 36: Respondent organisations’ view on main barriers to growth for SSE organisations in general**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Accessing appropriate finance	64%	74%	48%	25%
Regulations/administrative burdens	35%	35%	40%	25%
Lack of awareness	34%	35%	33%	30%
Lack of a tradition of cooperation	26%	24%	26%	35%
Poor commissioning and procurement from the public sector	24%	28%	14%	15%
Lack of access to advice and business support	18%	21%	14%	5%
Lack of appropriate business skills	13%	13%	17%	10%
Difficulty in recruiting and finding the right people	12%	11%	14%	15%
Finding the right premises or workspace	7%	4%	14%	20%
Lack of creativity in the younger generation	7%	7%	5%	15%
Lack of capacity and time	7%	5%	10%	15%
Other (specify)	4%	4%	7%	0%
Don't know/no opinion	1%	1%	0%	5%

In terms of the specific barriers to growth faced by the respondent organisations, three of the top five barriers are finance-related. This may indicate that any plan to improve the enabling environment for SSE organisations could focus on addressing financial challenges — both in terms of accessing finance to grow and develop, and also in terms of working capital to operate. The legal entities not on the MoL registry who responded also view government regulations and administrative burdens as much of a barrier as obtaining finance.

An important finding from the correlation analysis is that there is a strong statistical association between one particular barrier and the geography of operation of the organisations. More specifically there is a strong association between the “poor commissioning and procurement from the public sector” and the geographic regions of operation. Regions outside Attica seem to have many more difficulties with coping with the public sector which is especially evident in Thessaly and Western Greece. This is in line with our fieldwork findings that show that a decentralisation of the public mechanisms related to SSE is crucial for boosting its development.

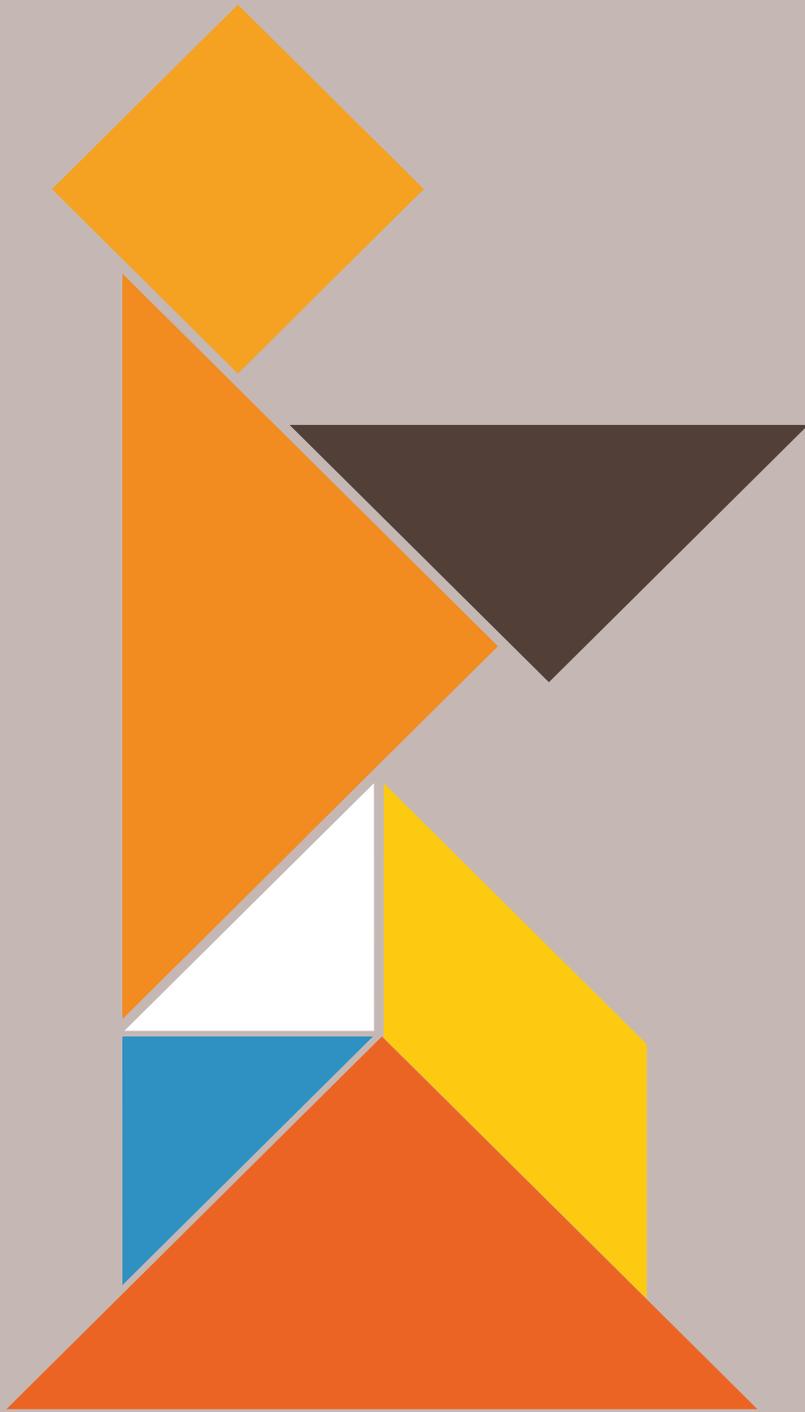
**Table 37: Specific barriers to growth faced by respondent organisations**

	Percentage of ALL respondents	Percentage of Category A MoL REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category B NON-REGISTRY organisations	Percentage of Category C INFORMAL entities
Obtaining other forms of finance	26%	28%	22%	22%
Cash flow	16%	18%	15%	0%
Obtaining grants	11%	9%	17%	11%
Government regulations and administrative burdens	11%	6%	22%	17%
Lack of awareness of social and solidarity enterprise in Greece	10%	12%	5%	6%
Other	7%	6%	2%	22%
Availability of suitable premises and workspace	4%	3%	7%	6%
Recruiting staff or volunteers	4%	4%	5%	0%
Shortage of business skills	3%	4%	0%	0%
Time pressures	3%	2%	0%	17%
Lack of access to business support and advice	3%	4%	0%	0%
Poor commissioning and procurement of public services	3%	4%	2%	0%
Don't know/no opinion	1%	1%	2%	0%

It is interesting to note that although the absence of tools for effective finance and a lack of cash flow for investments were seen as the biggest barriers for growth amongst stakeholder interviewees, it was hardly mentioned during the focus groups and interviews and only by SSE organisations. This is because many of these SSE organisations seek to operate outside of the mainstream finance system; indeed, many were established originally to *oppose* the mainstream economic system. So there are some obvious challenges for those wishing to secure financial and business support in new ways, and equally for those wanting their SSE organisations to run effectively, but without compromising their principles and values.

Another key challenge and barrier to growth to arise was the lack of knowledge and awareness in relation to the SSE. Many participants believe that the majority of society does not know what the SSE is about, and that it is confused with the old model of agricultural and farmers' cooperatives. Some further are of the opinion that finance programmes between some of the newly founded SSE organisations and the municipal authorities undertaking social services (that were previously offered by the state) have actually *reinforced* this controversial aspect of the sector (that is, the state-patronised cooperatives of the past).

Connected to this is the challenge of trying to transform consumer behaviours. Many participants believe that a main barrier for the further development of the SSE relates to a lack of education amongst local communities about the benefits of supporting and consuming local products, and about avoiding imported products from multinationals. In short, they trust that raising awareness in this area will also help to build the market for SSE organisations. This is particularly important when recognising the fact that the majority of SSE organisations are concerned with creating and selling products, as opposed to service delivery.



# 3. Recommendations for creating an effective SSE eco-system in Greece

This section outlines the key barriers and opportunities for creating an effective eco-system in Greece, based on the results of the qualitative and quantitative research carried out as part of this mapping study.

It covers the different elements necessary for building a favourable and enabling environment to support the start-up, development, sustainability and growth of SSE organisations, as well as the development of the wider social economy.

The challenges and recommendations identified draw from the following range of sources:

- The survey, focus groups and semi-structured interviews conducted as part of this mapping study
- A policy dialogue event that took place in Athens on 28-29 June 2017 as part of this study
- Desk research undertaken as part of this study, including a review of existing research containing policy recommendations
- Examples of different international policies and programmes.

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Given that the vast majority of survey respondents in this study felt there is significant potential for the development of SSE organisations in their sector (91 per cent) and region (90 per cent), and a similar proportion (90 per cent) expect their organisation to grow within the next 12 months, there are a host of opportunities to be realised across the SSE sector.

As the SSE sector in Greece is still at a very early stage in its development, there is a wide range of potential initiatives, interventions and policies that could address current challenges and barriers, and support the needs of SSE organisations. The opportunities outlined below aim to help prioritise these potential interventions, based on the requirements of the sector.

The challenges and recommendations in this section are structured around four key elements of an effective eco-system for the SSE:

1. Awareness and promotion (including sector-specific infrastructure)
2. Finance and funding
3. Training, education and skills (non-financial support)
4. Regulation and legislation.

Following these, a set of recommendations for further research is presented, which acknowledges some of the limitations of this study and identifies areas that will benefit from more in-depth research in the future.

## 3.1 Awareness and promotion

This section focuses on the broader awareness and promotion of the SSE as a movement, including amongst the general public and areas of government. The opportunities recognise the need to not only raise general awareness, but also to increase the understanding of the impact and potential of SSE organisations.

### **Challenges and barriers:**

Survey responses as part of this study show that SSE organisations in Greece operate across a wide range of different sectors, from food processing and tourism, to social care and waste and recycling. This indicates that their income also comes from a wide range of people and organisations. It's also clear that SSE organisations work and partner with a range of different organisation types, including municipalities, universities, civil society organisations, trade associations and trade unions.

Yet awareness of the SSE in its current form is still relatively low. According to the survey responses, promotion of the SSE and awareness raising activities are viewed as an important aspect of an enabling eco-system, with 20 per cent of respondents wanting to attract new customers or clients in the coming year, and 34 per cent believing a lack of awareness is one of the main challenges to the growth of SSE organisations. For 10 per cent of survey respondents, a lack of awareness of the SSE in Greece is perceived as the *main* barrier their organisation is currently facing.

This is strongly backed up by the fieldwork, which highlighted fragmented and unorganised development of the SSE in recent years as a key problem in this area, while also rec-

ognising that it can't be addressed by the state alone. Many focus group participants and interviewees noted the lack of awareness amongst different groups and a broader lack of knowledge in the field as key barriers to progress and involvement. They also specifically noted the lack of awareness amongst state agencies and ministries (other than the MoL), which can lead to lack of a joined-up approach and inconsistencies across government.

More broadly, many felt that there is a general lack of understanding within wider society about the SSE, and that it is still confused with the older and somewhat discredited model of agricultural and farmers' cooperatives. Focus group participants identified the education of local societies to support and consume local produce as critical, because building awareness can help to attract customers and support sustainability. This consumer aspect takes on additional importance given the larger proportions involved in creating and selling products (compared to, say, delivering services).

Previous research (e.g., Nasioulas and Mavroeidis, 2013) supports this evidence of little public awareness or demand, and specifically of a lack of strong case studies and examples. Nevertheless, one positive aspect is that there is strong consensus about the importance of the SSE across the political spectrum.

It is also noticeable that there are emerging trade associations and groups relating to particular types of SSE organisations that could convene in stronger regional and national networks. This would help to not only support SSE organisations, but also to build an evidence base, raise awareness, promote case studies, run events and undertake campaigns. Whilst it may be too early to adopt a common brand or 'mark' to identify SSE products and services, it is not too early for a national organisation to begin to advocate for the needs of SSE organisations. As the fieldwork identified, there is currently a lack of mechanisms for communication between SSE networks and collectives and the state.

### **Recommendations:**

Based on the results of this study, the following set of actions have been identified to support awareness-raising and promotion:

1) Establish a **national centre for the SSE** to provide some key roles:

- Undertake a research function or observatory, to build on this existing study collate relevant SSE data
- Coordinate and convene events, conferences and networks to support SSE organisations
- Support local hubs and development centres doing similar work locally and regionally
- Champion the SSE sector amongst key audiences (through resources such as case studies)
- Provide a clear route of communication to government ministries
- Provide information and knowledge to SSE organisations at all stages.

There are many examples of such centres in Europe, including Social Enterprise UK, Mouves (France), Smart Kolektiv (Serbia), Social Enterprise NL (Netherlands) and worldwide, including the Social Enterprise Alliance in the US. The latter model may be of particular interest as, although similarly having a membership structure, it is more federated than the UK or Dutch models, with local chapters having more autonomy and say in their state (see <https://socialenterprise.us/community/chapter-directory/>).

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An independent national body, run by the SSE sector itself, can build a collaborative and clear relationship with government — being both a voice upward and having the ability to advocate for the SSE sector, but also to help communicate and disseminate new programmes and information from government to the wider movement. The government could support its establishment, but in the long term it should be driven and run by the sector itself.

2) Create a **communication and dissemination strategy** to raise awareness. Effective actions could be the following:

a. Consider an SSE **Ambassadors programme**. Many countries run programmes to identify SSE leaders (those with a great story, great potential or a great organisation) and work with them to create communication materials and speaking opportunities to raise their profile and that of the wider SSE movement. This helps create a cohort of champions for the movement from people within it, and can support communication and awareness-raising to particular priority audiences.

b. Create **video and social media case studies** to maximise reach and awareness. Either in conjunction with an Ambassadors programme, or working with existing networks, a cost-effective way of raising awareness is to create short video clips and stories of some leading SSE organisations to help communicate what they do, the people they help and the difference they are making. Social media platforms can be used to encourage stakeholders to support the communication effort.

A mainstream television or radio platform can also help to break through in terms of public awareness, although this has happened in very few countries. Examples of individual SSE organisations or social entrepreneurs appearing on mainstream business television programmes (such as **The Apprentice** or **Dragons Den**) has helped to raise their profile in several countries.

c. Run and support local fairs and awareness days. One common technique for raising awareness across different countries has been to coordinate a campaign at the same time as Global Entrepreneurship Week, in the form of a Social Enterprise Day or a Social Saturday. This encourages members of the public, politicians and others to visit an enterprise and make a purchase. These are often most successful locally, where local media and networks can be mobilised around a series of events.

## 3.2 Funding and finance

This section focuses on the financial needs of SSE organisations and what potential programmes and tools might be introduced to address these.

### Challenges and barriers:

As is common in most European countries, access to finance emerges as one of the key factors (enabling or disabling) to an individual organisation's sustainability and growth in Greece. Indeed, the survey responses show that the top three barriers for individual organisations all relate to finance: obtaining finance (26 per cent), cash flow and liquidity (16 per cent), and obtaining grants (11 per cent). Similarly, accessing appropriate finance that takes into account the particularities of SSE organisations was chosen by almost two-thirds of respondents as the main challenge to the growth of SSE organisations in general (64 per cent). This lack of availability of appropriate finance is also reflected in organisational plans for growth, with only four per cent of respondents planning on using investment or finance to expand within the next 12 months.

The survey responses are reinforced by the qualitative fieldwork, which highlighted a distinct absence of tools for providing effective finance. What emerges more clearly in the fieldwork is the extent to which there is a fundamental challenge for some of the SSE organisations that have *deliberately* established themselves in opposition to the mainstream economic system (and, therefore, finance providers). This is connected to the broader scepticism about mainstream notions of economic growth. The participants, however, did also view the wider collapse of private finance as an opportunity to consider and develop alternative forms of finance. In this sense, the SSE can be part of redesigning a new social economy and more 'social' finance.

Previous research reiterates this point. The mapping study published by the European Commission in 2014 notes that interviewees had great difficulty accessing any type of finance (especially seed finance) from commercial or cooperative banks. And banks were not interested in acting as intermediaries to finance from outside of Greece (not a great surprise given the other challenges facing those banks in the same period). The report concludes: *"[Social enterprises in Greece] finance themselves mainly from public grants or contracts, donations, or from their income generating activities. All the Greek interviewees considered the lack of instruments specifically designed for social enterprises and the lack of opportunities to access sources of financing to be a key obstacle in their development."*

The evidence from this and previous reports is that Greek SSE organisations are almost overwhelmingly small in size, turnover and experience. Their demands, therefore, are comparable with those of start-up and early stage SSE organisations across Europe and the world: a bank account with an understanding provider, primarily seed capital in the form of grants, and possibly some subsidised loans as they become more established. This is reflected in their current income sources. It is also likely, given the centrality of democratic principles to Greek SSE organisations, that financing concepts like crowdfunding and community shares will be of particular interest.

Almost all stakeholders in Greece agree that the answers lie in a mix of finance providers:

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state, private (individual), private (institutional), alternative and community-based.

### Recommendations:

1) Establish an independent **social enterprise pre-start grant fund** that offers grants to help individuals or teams start up, test out and pilot their activities. This could help foster a greater wave of start-ups and new activities before they establish a legal form (as that itself is a barrier). Ideally, this financial support would be accompanied by coaching and/or mentoring, and would only be awarded on the basis of a short business or project plan.

The most well-known model of this type is UnLtd in the UK, which has distributed 15,000 grants to individuals between 2003 and 2017. It does so generally in small amounts at different levels reflecting different commitment needed at different stages (£2,500, £5,000, £10,000 and £20,000) and disperses a greater number of grants in the lower denominations. This model has been reflected and adapted in many countries across the world, including Ireland, Spain, Bulgaria and others across Europe (see [www.gsen.global/members](http://www.gsen.global/members)).

2) Convene a **social finance task force** to identify specific financing gaps and to develop proposals on prospective financial innovations to decide whether they would be viable or effective in a Greek context. This task force, comprising experts from both the Greek social economy and from community finance, should focus particularly on the potential for alternative forms of finance from outside the mainstream including:

- Microloans and guarantees
- Crowdfunding (and other peer-to-peer finance)
- Community shares
- Repayable grants
- Social bonds
- Social angels (from the diaspora as well as those in Greece).

Some notable examples are the microfinance and social entrepreneurship work by the European Union (see [ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1084](http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1084)), different crowdfunding platforms from across Europe, such as Crowdfunder UK and Startnext (Germany), and international examples such as Chuffed.org, which started in Australia but now also serves large parts of Europe, as well as the work of Community Shares Scotland (see [communitysharescotland.org.uk/](http://communitysharescotland.org.uk/)) and ClearlySocialAngels (see <https://www.clearlyso.com/investors/clearly-social-angels/>).

3) Improve the **accessibility** to mainstream Greek government and European Union funding programmes for SSE organisations. Given the lack of private bank financing and investment, the government and the European Union have a larger role to play, and one of the swiftest approaches is to ensure access for all SSE organisations to existing business finance programmes. This is partly technical (ensuring these legal forms qualify) but often much more about promotion and awareness (ensuring these organisations know the opportunities exist).

4) Work with cooperative and mainstream banks to provide access to basic **business banking** services. By working with banks, the government and other stakeholders can help ensure it is easier for SSE organisations to open bank accounts and that bank staff understand the different range of legal forms and legal statuses of SEE organisations (and how

they operate).

5) Consider **corporate social responsibility regulation**, which requires large private sector businesses to put a proportion of their profits towards social impact projects. In India, businesses with a turnover of more than £100 million are required to donate two per cent of their profits to charitable projects or social benefit. (see [www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2016/apr/05/india-csr-law-requires-companies-profits-to-charity-is-it-working](http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2016/apr/05/india-csr-law-requires-companies-profits-to-charity-is-it-working) and [www.pwc.in/assets/pdfs/publications/2013/handbook-on-corporate-social-responsibility-in-india.pdf](http://www.pwc.in/assets/pdfs/publications/2013/handbook-on-corporate-social-responsibility-in-india.pdf)) Consideration should be given to what a Greek equivalent of this model would look like to support the wider social economy.

### 3.3 Training, education and skills (non-financial support)

This section focuses on non-financial support, so the training, education and networks that can help the SSE movement in Greece reach its potential, and support the success of individual organisations.

#### Challenges and barriers:

The survey responses reveal the need for support and training for SSE organisations in a range of areas. Whilst the educational level of SSE leaders is high (41 per cent have post-graduate or doctoral level education), more business-focused training is lacking, either at start-up stage or once SSE organisations are established. Existing SSE networks are generally used for information exchange and learning, with few members gaining personal support or business benefits from their participation. A total of 18 per cent of the survey respondents highlighted a lack of access to advice and business support as a key challenge to the growth of SSE organisations, and a further 13 per cent identified a broader lack of appropriate business skills as another key challenge.

The findings from the fieldwork compound this, with many participants highlighting challenges in relation to a lack of skills and knowledge, including (internal) communication skills, decision-making and associated conflict-resolution skills, and general business and managerial skills. This is no surprise given the starting points of many of these entities and how little capacity and experience they have.

It is noticeable that while a large majority of the organisations surveyed can demonstrate decision-making by the assembly (81 per cent), participation of members (75 per cent), allocation of work by collective decision-making (73 per cent) and regular information meetings (63 per cent), much fewer have a business plan (45 per cent), internal auditing (34 per cent), or any way of evaluating the organisation's viability (15 per cent). This provides a picture of a small, principled and highly values-driven group of organisations, but one whose business skills, processes and experience are limited.

Previous research identifies some further gaps. Although a number of SSE organisations work with or partner with universities, there is little integration of social enterprise in higher education (*Outline Strategy and Priorities for Action to Develop the Social Economy and*

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*Social Entrepreneurship in Greece*, 2013). The mapping study published by the European Commission in 2014 similarly notes that SSE organisations cannot access mainstream business support, which is commonly available to start-up and SME enterprises. The same report also identifies very few specialist support systems, such as incubators, mentoring, dedicated networks or specialist finance and legal support. Although these have been added to since (as shown in Section 1.4), there are still some gaps with only few support structures having developed a specialty in supporting SSE organisations. The others have a focus either on entrepreneurship in general or civil society organisations and initiatives. This indicates that support structures and consultants may lack the understanding needed to support SSE organisations. The report also notes a lack of social impact reporting in any substantive way.

The policy dialogue event hosted as part of this study also highlighted the need for both personal development skills and more knowledge-based business skills, to enable organisations to become more effective. Most of the SSE organisations that participated felt that, as it was too early in the development of an effective eco-system to offer specialist training, more general support approaches would be of most benefit.

### **Recommendations:**

1) Import and adapt proven **specialist start-up support learning programmes** that support individuals and teams running SSE organisations. There are a range around the world, including the School for Social Entrepreneurs, which operates across the UK, Canada and India (see [www.the-sse.org/](http://www.the-sse.org/)). These programmes support up to 20 leaders at a time, and can be focused on very early-stage enterprises, as well as those who are more established or seeking to scale. They also combine the social impact, values and social purpose with the business skills and commercial knowledge that successful SSE organisations need. As with the UnLtd model mentioned above, these programmes can be run in conjunction with grants, and entry is based on having a project or plan in mind (so leading to action).

One recommendation could be to run four pilot programmes in different locations, for example, Athens, Thessaloniki, Central Macedonia and Crete, to test their effectiveness in different contexts and identify potential adaptations.

2) Implement **peer action learning sets**. One particularly useful aspect of the school for social entrepreneurs programme across a variety of leadership settings are 'action learning sets'. These are small groups of peers who meet up on a regular basis to share challenges, seek advice and build strong relationship-based networks. As with the programmes above, a lower-cost approach could be to set up four to six facilitated action learning sets for leaders in different locations in Greece. This could work with and be coordinated by existing networks and trade associations, or emerge from them.

3) Improve the **accessibility** to mainstream government business support programmes for SSE organisations, either current or planned for the future. As with financing, a common problem in different countries is that SSE organisations are viewed differently to SMEs and other businesses, despite the significant crossover of required skills. Providing access for all SSE organisations to planned and future business support programmes (and networks) can help make most effective use of these initiatives, and increase the recognition of the SSE as part of the wider economy.

4) SSE associations, networks and government should seek to work with **universities and high schools** to integrate the SSE across different curricula. Given the high level of education of many SSE leaders and participants, as well as the value placed on education in Greece, educational institutions should be seen as a key priority area to provide support raise awareness, and build knowledge.

Possible actions could include an event to promote different approaches/best practices in the inclusion of SSE in educational settings, or a challenge fund for education providers seeking to run new innovations in this area.

5) **Social impact measurement training** should be introduced. There are many models available, such as Social Value International and Social Auditing Network, and many organisations that provide training and support. One recommendation is to utilise the seven principles underpinning Social Value International's approach, and to provide direct Introduction to Social Impact workshops in different locations in Greece as a way of addressing this gap in technical skills and knowledge. The establishment of a **social value network** in Greece, as has taken place in many other countries, could help facilitate this (there are 20 around the world, including across Europe: see: [socialvalueint.org/national-networks](http://socialvalueint.org/national-networks))

## 3.4 Legislation and regulation

This section, which primarily concerns government agencies, focuses on how regulation, legislation and a broader administrative framework might be amended and improved to facilitate the growth and impact of the SSE.

### Challenges and barriers:

Previous research (notably the mapping study published by the European Commission in 2014) has identified the narrow and bureaucratic nature of law 4019/2011 as a barrier for SSE organisations. While awareness of the more comprehensive new legislation (L.4430/2016) is high (88 per cent of survey respondents), and it is recognised for improving the inconsistencies of previous legislation and broadly welcomed in principle (as evidenced from focus group discussions), there are still some clear challenges. Survey respondents with a legal form who hadn't joined the MoL registry were either ineligible or did not see the value in doing so with the law in its current form. Focus group participants and interviewees believed it to be complicated, vague and restrictive in certain aspects, partly because it is related to horizontal legislation that is complicated in itself (e.g. social security, taxation, and trade laws), partly because it tries to foresee all possible violations to the principles of SSE which leads to restrictive clauses (e.g. percentage of turnover that has to be channeled to wages) and partly because it sets such percentages on re-distribution of profit, reinvestment and employability, which are difficult to achieve for some — and even challenge the viability of their business model.

More than 16 European countries have some form of legislation that recognises and regulates social enterprise activity, either by creating social enterprise forms or social enterprise legal statuses (see [esela.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/legal\\_mapping\\_publica-](http://esela.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/legal_mapping_publica-)

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[tion\\_051015\\_web.pdf](#)). Most are less restrictive than the Greek legislation, although some have other demands and constraints. For example, the Social Enterprise Ex-Lege in Italy mandates the involvement (or inclusion) of workers and beneficiaries in the governance of organisations in some way, and requires organisations to submit a social impact report. The Community Interest Company structure in the UK is much less restrictive on sectors of operation and democratic practices, but similarly requires all to submit a social impact report (community benefit return) as well as their financial accounts. Denmark has a relatively new registration system also seeking to encompass different legal forms in one registry that uses characteristics as its criteria (see: [socialvirksomhed.dk/en/about-social-economy-i-denmark/the-criteria-to-be-labelled-a-social-enterprise](https://socialvirksomhed.dk/en/about-social-economy-i-denmark/the-criteria-to-be-labelled-a-social-enterprise)). The administration is run by the government's business authority, but the directory is published by the independent National Centre for Social Enterprises.

Other aspects of regulation and broader administration are also a barrier to SSE organisations. When asked about the barriers to the growth of SSE organisations in their region or sector, 35 per cent of survey respondents identified government regulations and administrative burdens — the second highest answer. When asked about barriers for their organisation specifically, 11 per cent said government regulations and administrative burdens were the main barrier. Bureaucracy in the sense of creating processes that seem unnecessary was also mentioned as a major barrier in almost every focus group and interview undertaken as part of the qualitative research of this study.

Tax incentives and subsidies were highlighted throughout the previous research, and also emerged in the focus group conversations. In the latter, for example, participants noted that subsidies (and grants) should be related to business plans and evaluations (i.e., in relation to actual activity) rather than on being registered as a particular form. This would mean that incentives and subsidies would be for what an SSE organisation *does* not for what it *is*.

A final aspect to consider is procurement and commissioning. Again, this was identified as a barrier in the study results (with 24 per cent of respondents highlighting it as a barrier to wider growth of the SSE), and also emerges in previous research (Nasioulas and Mavroeidis, 2013) where the lack of clear social clauses in procurement or social value being taken into account in public sector commissioning is noted. There have been some attempts to make improvements in this area, the most notable being the embodiment of European Directive 24/2014 concerning Public Procurement in Greek legislation through law 4412/2016, wherein the social clauses for public procurement are set out. However, in terms of implementation, the progress made has been rather slow.

### **Recommendations:**

1) **Amendments to law 4430/2016** could help to facilitate the growth and impact of more SSE organisations. Feedback from SSE organisations referred to three main elements:

- Further simplification of the law to allow for even greater coherence
- More flexibility within the criteria, particularly with regard to profit distribution and reinvestment limitations
- Consideration of evaluation and introducing more reliable 'checking mechanisms'.

Making criteria more flexible could allow for a more inclusive movement that comprises all parts of the social economy, and could enable organisations at an earlier stage to be

included and gain access to support, while they are still establishing their business model. The introduction of ‘checking mechanisms’ relates partly to respondents believing that the government should have a more enabling (rather than ‘verifying’) role with regard to the SSE, and also that there should be more of a focus on the achievement of social outcomes over structural considerations.

2) Ensure the **registration process** is simplified and more accessible, ideally by allowing organisations to register online or at a government office local to them.

3) Advance the **introduction of social clauses and social value** into government and local authority procurement and commissioning. As the legislation to this is already in place (L.4412.2016), implementing the law is now the main issue. This would help SSE organisations gain access to opportunities for delivering public services (which is relatively limited at present).

A notable example is the Public Services (Social Value) Act in England and Wales (see: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-value-act-information-and-resources/social-value-act-information-and-resources](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-value-act-information-and-resources/social-value-act-information-and-resources)), which demands that every part of the public sector, national and local, considers the environmental and social value, as well as the economic value, in each procurement process. This allows for the selection of social objectives that are relevant to the local context of operations. The government could also consider including weighting (for example, 20 per cent of contract assessment could take into account social value) or targeted spend (for example, one per cent of infrastructure contracts could be assigned to a particular type of organisation).

4) Pilot potential **tax incentives** and targeted subsidies for SSE organisations in a particular location: a Greek ‘social enterprise zone’. Clearly, this needs to be approached sensitively (for example, not going against competition law), but such measures might include:

- Tax rebates proportionate to employment of specific groups
- Tax relief for individuals and institutions investing in SSE organisations in the area
- Relating tax incentives to social results or outcomes achieved
- Central government agreeing to match any local grants provided to SSE organisations in the area.

The approach in Denmark allows for the extension of ‘special terms’ to social enterprises employing people from disadvantaged groups (see: [socialvirksomhed.dk/en/initiatives/other-initiatives/other-initiatives](http://socialvirksomhed.dk/en/initiatives/other-initiatives/other-initiatives)). The UK’s Social Enterprise Places scheme also seeks to mobilise resources and investment into particular areas to build awareness and local social enterprise activity (see: [www.socialenterprise.org.uk/about-places](http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/about-places)).

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## 3.5 Recommendations for further research

While this mapping study builds on previous work and provides a more in-depth assessment of SSE activity in Greece, it is not all-encompassing and does not cover every niche and challenge in-depth. What has been noted throughout the study is that there are some key areas where more in-depth research might be useful.

**1) Intention and motivation:** there was interest from a number of stakeholders to understand people's intentions and motivations for starting SSE enterprises. This is probably best done as qualitative research, and should look at whether these organisations are starting from need, innovation or personal experience (or a combination of these and other factors).

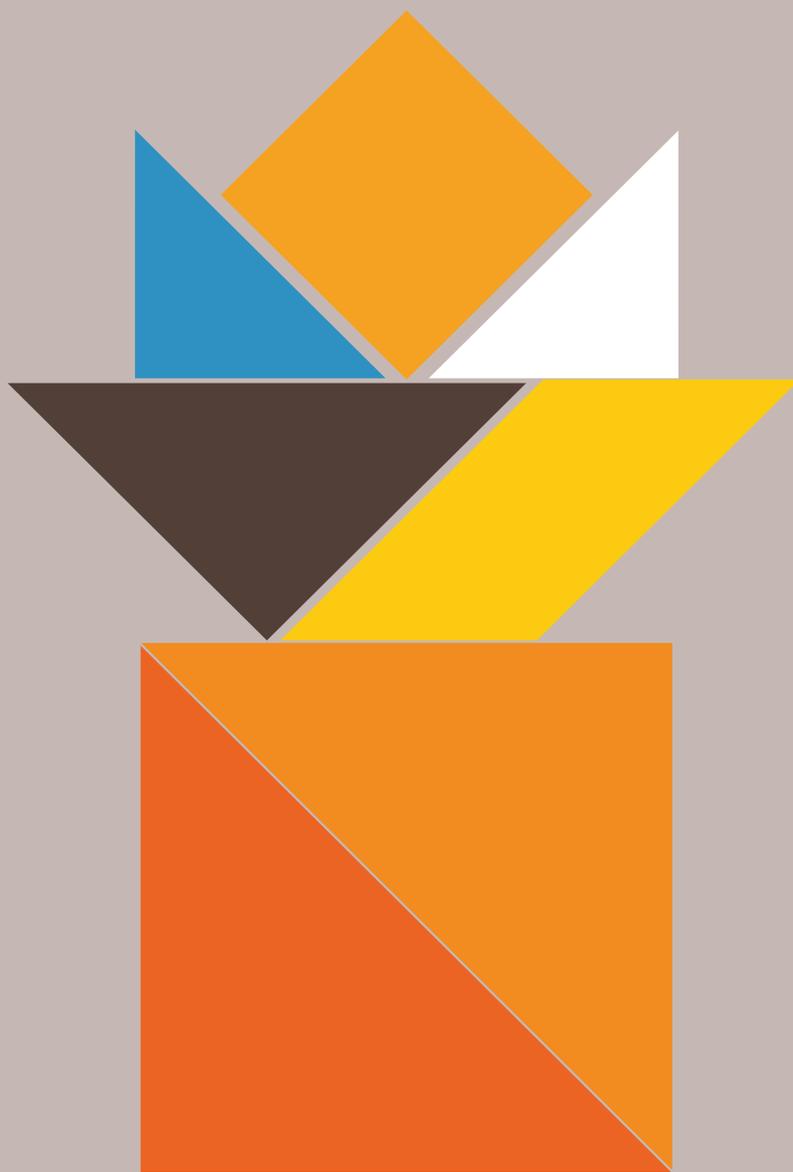
**2) Social Objectives and entrepreneurial means:** related to intention and motivation, it would also be useful to conduct further research on the specific stated social goals of SSE organisations, their relation to the social impact produced, the entrepreneurial means of achieving the stated social goals and the consistency between the two. This may help in clarifying different models of SSE organisations in terms of their social goals, entrepreneurial activity and financial sustainability.

**3) Local eco-systems:** the focus group in Karditsa started to identify some of the specific support initiatives and elements that have made it a local eco-system particularly supportive of the SSE, but a more in-depth piece of work should look at the critical success factors in creating such a supportive environment. This could take into account the role of individuals, of relationships, of key institutions, of mindsets/cultural traditions, and of local contextual circumstances. This could be important in understanding how such an environment could be replicated elsewhere.

**4) Inactivity:** this is more specifically of interest to the MoL's SSE registry, to understand why different organisations on the registry are active or inactive. This is unlikely to be identified through online survey work but more so through focus groups and fieldwork. This research could help a range of stakeholders understand why SSE organisations might be inactive before the introduction of the new law and after it came into legislation.

**5) Internal barriers:** this mapping study places specific emphasis on the external systemic factors that can act as barriers to SSE development as a way of supporting policy-making and implementation at the state level. It will be useful in the future to identify those factors internal to SSE organisations that impede their development and sustainability. In addition, further research in the area of decision-making with regard to everyday operations will help clarify effective models of democratic governance and decision-making.





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# Conclusions

What this report reveals is a young SSE, albeit one with roots and foundations in the past, and one with great potential to grow and expand its impact. SSE organisations in Greece are seeking to tackle some of the country's most significant challenges, notably poverty and unemployment, but they are also seeking to promote and demonstrate an alternative economic model. This report builds on the picture presented by previous research, most notably the mapping study published by the European Commission in 2014, which similarly revealed a young and nascent sector with little sense of collective identity.

The SSE sector has a dynamism that can be seen in the number of SSE organisations that have established themselves more recently, and in their ambitions for growing their turnover and workforce. They are also diverse, not only in their form, but also in their social objectives and sectors. There is a breadth and depth to their economic and social contribution. This is exciting, in that there is potential across the full range of Greek society. But it is also a challenge; while there are many similarities, each segment and category also has different priorities, modes of networking, needs and barriers to overcome. The initial categorisation of SSE organisations contained in this report may help inform future work on this aspect of the sector, as may the further areas of research identified.

Many SSE organisations are relatively small and recently established, and they are faced with extremely challenging economic conditions in which to start up, become sustainable and grow. This challenging economic and social landscape is viewed by SSE actors as a reason why a stronger SSE is needed — to create new opportunities, to address high levels of unemployment, and to establish new models and ways of doing things in areas the mainstream has failed.

Yet this challenging landscape is also a barrier to that progress. There is a burgeoning eco-system, but also a lack of specialist support, of networks in every geography and of a national network that could help make a stronger and more compelling case for the movement. There are particular weaknesses in the eco-system around social value (and measurement), and of appropriate forms of finance for organisations at different stages of their work and activity. These also represent opportunities for investment, as highlighted in this report.

What is clear from the survey respondents and fieldwork participants is a strong belief that the SSE can be significantly expanded in the years to come. And that they have some tangible ideas on how that can be enabled, facilitated and supported by the government and a range of other actors, be that in skills development, alternative finance, simplified and more flexible legislation, or championing of the sector to others. These views and ideas have been synthesised with the quantitative evidence from the survey to inform the opportunities presented in this report and to provide an evidence base and set of information for others to draw and build upon.



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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Online survey questionnaire

### Q1. What is the official name of your organisation?

Official name  
Trading name

### Q2. What is your role in the organisation?

Legal Representative  
Other Director  
Member  
Managing Director/CEO  
Owner  
Employee  
Volunteer  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

### Q3. In what year did your organisation begin operating?

### Q4. How many members does your organisation have, if any?

### Q5. Where in Greece does your organisation have its headquarters? [provide postcode]

### Q6. What is the widest geographic area your organisation operates across:

Neighborhood  
Local/provincial  
Regional  
National  
International  
Don't know/no opinion

### Q7. How would you describe your organisation? [single response only]

Social and solidarity economy actor with a legal form, e.g., social cooperatives  
Social and solidarity economy actor without legal form, e.g., time bank

Entities without legal form

### Q10. How would you describe your organisation?

Social enterprise  
Social and solidarity economy organisation  
Voluntary organisation  
Non-profit organisation  
Mutual aid organisation  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

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**Q11. Please tell us which of the following characteristics your organisation meets: [multiple response allowed]**

Formally constituted/legal form  
Informal group  
Democratically controlled  
Non-monetary activity  
Trading (selling goods and services for money)  
Rules on limits to profit distribution  
Defined community/social/environmental benefit  
Financially independent of the state  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q12. Do you know that there is a new national law (Law 4430/2016) for social and solidarity economy organisations?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q13. Which internal practices do you implement at your organisation? [multiple response allowed]**

Allocation of roles and work by means of collective decision-making  
Alllocation of roles by the person in charge/Director  
Equal pay for equal work  
Pay according to criteria (specialisation, years of experience, special needs)  
Participation of members in the life of the organisation  
Decision-making by the General Assembly  
Decision-making by the Members of the Board  
Regular information meetings involving all members of the organisation  
Rotation in positions of responsibility  
Training activities  
Actions for the local community  
Internal auditing procedures  
Business viability plan for the organisation  
Evaluation mechanism of the organisation's viability  
Research mechanism of opportunities for development of the organisation  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q14. What are your organisation's overall objectives? [multiple response allowed]**

Improving a particular community  
Creating employment opportunities (including for members)  
Supporting vulnerable people  
Improving health and well being  
Promoting education and literacy  
Addressing financial exclusion  
Protecting the environment  
Strengthening the position of women and girls/gender equality  
Providing affordable housing  
Supporting other social and solidarity economy organisations  
Providing access to quality products/services at fair prices  
Fighting inequalities  
Promoting societal change  
Promoting another model for work  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q15. What is the principal activity of your organisation?**

Time banks  
Networks without intermediaries  
Exchange networks, bazaars, exchange-based initiatives  
Community grocery stores  
Community kitchens  
Community learning via time banks or other exchange system

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Self-managed workspaces with trading activities  
Hacker-spaces, open software communities  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q16. What is the main source of your income?**

Trading with the public sector  
Trading with the private sector  
Trading with social and solidarity economy organizations  
Trading with the general public  
Trading internationally  
Grants from local government  
Grants from the state  
Grants from the private sector  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other grants (please specify)

**Q17. What other organisations do you partner or trade with ? [multiple response allowed]**

Universities  
Trade unions  
Regions/municipalities  
Trade associations  
Professional associations  
Civil society organisations  
International organisations  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q18. What percentage, approximately, among your members is women;**

Up to 20per cent  
Up to 40per cent  
Up to 60per cent  
Over 60per cent  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q19. Do you consider any of the following groups to benefit directly from your organisation's core business activities?**

**[multiple response allowed]**

Long-term unemployed  
Individuals with a physical disability  
Individuals with a learning or mental disability  
The homeless or people in insecure housing  
People coming out of offending  
Refugees and asylum seekers  
Individuals with addiction problems (drugs or alcohol)  
Young people with delinquent behaviour  
Domestic violence victims  
Trafficking victims  
Older people  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q20. How many people do you estimate you have supported in total in the last 12 months? [number box]**

**Q21. Do you measure your social and environmental impact?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q22. Is there a clear internal hierarchy in your organisation?**

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Yes  
No  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q23. What level of education does the person most responsible for managing your organisation have?**

Postgraduate/doctoral studies  
Higher education graduate  
Vocational training school  
Upper secondary school/technical school  
Lower secondary school  
Primary school  
None of the above  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q24. In what age range is the person currently in charge of your organisation (if there is one)?**

16-24  
25-44  
45-64  
65+  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q25. Is the person currently in charge of your organisation (if there is one) from a vulnerable group?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q26. What is the gender of the person currently in charge of your organisation (if there is one) ?**

Male  
Female  
Other  
Don't know / no opinion

**Q27. Does your organisation participate in any regional, national or European network?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know / no opinion

**Q28. What are the benefits from your participation in a social and solidarity economy network?**

Access to useful information  
Learning from other SSE organisations  
Learning from other organisations  
Personal support and relationships  
Business advice  
Economic and business growth  
Visibility/ promoting supporting policies  
Don't know/ no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q29. Do you expect to grow your work in the coming year?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/ no opinion

**Q30. According to which principles do you choose suppliers and co-workers? [multiple response allowed]**

According to environmental criteria  
According to the existing labour relations  
According to the quality of their products/services  
Because they provide us with best prices  
Because they provide us with prices fair for both producers and consumers

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Because we share the same vision for economy  
Because we share the same political vision  
Because we participate in the same network  
Because they are members in other well-known cooperative networks  
Because they are prestigious in the sector  
Because their products are locally produced  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q31. What are the major barriers your organisation faces?**

Obtaining grants  
Obtaining other forms of finance  
Cash flow  
Recruiting staff or volunteers  
Shortage of business skills  
Time pressures  
Lack of access to business support and advice  
Lack of awareness of social and solidarity enterprises in Greece  
Government regulations and administrative burdens  
Availability of suitable premises and workspace  
Poor commissioning and procurement of public services  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q32. Do you find potential for the development of SSE enterprises and social enterprises in your sector?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q33. Do you think that public policies contribute to the development of SSE enterprises and social enterprises?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q34. What are the main challenges for the growth of SSE enterprises and social enterprises in your region or sector? (up to 3 responses)**

Lack of awareness  
Accessing appropriate finance  
Poor commissioning and procurement from the public sector  
Lack of capacity and time  
Lack of appropriate business skills  
Difficulty in recruiting and finding the right people  
Lack of access to advice and business support  
Regulations/administrative burdens  
Finding the right premises or workspace  
Lack of creativity in the younger generation  
Lack of a tradition of cooperation  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (specify)

Entities with legal form

**Q35. Which of the following do you think best characterizes your organisation?**

Social enterprise  
Social and solidarity economy organisation  
Voluntary organisation  
Non profit organisation  
Mutual aid organisation

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Don't know/ no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q36. Please tell us which of the following characteristics your organisation meets**

Formally constituted/legal form  
Informal group  
Democratically controlled by its members  
Non-monetary transactions  
Trading (selling goods and services for money)  
Rules on limits to profit distribution  
Defined community/social/environmental benefit  
Financially independent of the state  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q37. In what legal form(s) is your organisation registered?**

Social cooperative enterprise  
Limited liability social cooperative  
Worker cooperative  
Union/association  
Civil (urban) cooperative  
Agricultural cooperative  
Non-profit civil law partnership  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q38. Are you registered on the social and solidarity economy registry?**

Yes  
Don't know/no opinion  
No (please specify why not)

**Q39. Do you know that there is a new national law (4430/2016) for social and solidarity economy organisations?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/ no opinion

**Q40. Which internal practices do you implement at your organisation? [multiple responses allowed]**

Allocation of roles and work by means of collective decision-making  
Alllocation of roles by the person in charge/director  
Equal pay for equal work  
Pay according to criteria (specialisation, years of experience, special needs)  
Participation of members in the life of the organisation  
Decision-making by the General Assembly  
Decision-making by the Members of the Board  
Regular information meetings involving all members of the organisation  
Rotation in positions of responsibilities  
Training activities  
Actions for the local community  
Internal auditing procedures  
Business viability plan for the organisation  
Evaluation mechanism of the organisation' s viability  
Research mechanism of opportunities for development of the organisation  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q41. What are your organisation's overall objectives? [multiple response: select all that are applicable]**

Improving a particular community  
Creating employment opportunities (including for members)  
Supporting vulnerable people  
Improving health and wellbeing  
Promoting education and literacy

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Addressing financial exclusion  
Protecting the environment  
Strengthening women's position/gender equality  
Providing affordable housing  
Supporting other social and solidarity economy organisations  
Providing access to quality products/services at fair prices  
Fighting inequalities  
Promoting societal change  
Promoting another model for work  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q42. What is the principal trading activity of your organisation?**

Tourism services  
Food trade/processing  
Cleaning services  
Business support/consultancy  
Childcare  
Agriculture/livestock farming  
Education/culture and leisure  
Social care  
Health care/health services  
Hospitality services (cafes, restaurants)  
Technology/communication (web, design, print)  
Financial support and services  
Environmental (recycling, reuse)  
Transport  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q43. What was your organisation's annual turnover in the previous financial year?**

€0 - 10,000  
€10,000 - 20,000  
€20,000 - 30,000  
€30,000 - 40,000  
€40,000 - 50,000  
€50,000 - 100,000  
€100,000 - 150,000  
€150,000 - 200,000  
€200,000 - 250,000  
€250,000 - 300,000  
€300,000 - 350,000  
€350,000 - 400,000  
€450,000 - 500,000  
€500,000 - €1M  
€1M - €5M  
Over €5M  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q44. What do you expect to happen to your organisation's turnover next financial year?**

Increase  
Decrease  
Stay the same  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q45. In the last year what was your financial outturn?**

Made a profit/surplus  
Made a loss  
Neither profit nor loss

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Broke event  
Don't know / no opinion

**Q46. How is your profit/surplus mainly used?**

Job creation  
Investment  
Distribution to employees  
Distribution to members  
Support to other social and solidarity economy organisations  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q47. What is the main source of your income?**

Trading with the public sector  
Trading with the private sector  
Trading with social and solidarity economy organisations  
Trading with the general public  
Trading internationally  
Grants from local government  
Grants from the state  
Grants from the private sector  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other grants (specify)

**Q48. What other organisations do you partner or trade with? [multiple response allowed]**

Universities  
Trade unions  
Regions/municipalities  
Trade associations  
Professional associations  
Civil society organisations  
International organisations  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q49. What forms of finance and funding have you received (in the last year or since you started operating)? [multiple response allowed]**

Grant for a specific project/action  
Donation for the overall objectives of the organisation  
Loan  
Equity  
Mortgage  
Overdraft  
In-kind resources  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q50. Apart from organisational members, have there been any voluntary contributions by other people? How many people?**

**Q51. How many paid employees in total does your organisation employ?**

1  
2-4  
5-9  
10-25  
26-49  
50-99  
100-249  
250-499

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500+  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q52. How many of these are full-time (35+ hours per week)?**

**Q53. How many of these are part-time (34 or fewer hours per week)?**

**Q54. For those employed by your organisation, is their pay, their primary source of income?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q55. Approximately what proportion of your total workforce is made up of women?**

Up to 20per cent  
Up to 40per cent  
Up to 60per cent  
Over 60per cent  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q56. How do you expect the number of the employees to have changed by this time next year? They will be:**

More than currently  
The same  
Less than currently  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q57. On which of the following does your organisation place emphasis?**

Profit  
Collective/social/environmental benefit  
Both  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q58. Do you consider any of the following groups to benefit directly from your organisation's core business activities?**

**[multiple response/tick all that apply]**  
Long-term unemployed  
Individuals with a physical disability  
Individuals with a learning or mental disability  
Homeless or people in insecure housing  
People coming out of offending  
Refugees and asylum-seekers  
Individuals with addiction problems (alcohol, drugs)  
Young people with delinquent behaviour  
Domestic violence victims  
Trafficking victims  
Older people  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q59. How many people do you estimate you have supported in total in the last 12 months?**

[number box]

**Q60. Do you measure your social and environmental impact?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q61. Is there a clear internal hierarchy in your organisation?**

Yes  
No

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Don't know/no opinion

**Q62. What level of education does the person most responsible for managing your organisation have?**

Postgraduate/doctoral studies  
Higher education graduate  
Vocational training school  
Upper secondary education/technical school  
Lower secondary education  
Primary education  
None of the above  
Don't know / no opinion

**Q63. What is the gender of the person currently in charge of your organisation (if there is one)?**

Male  
Female  
Other  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q64. In what age range is the person currently in charge of the organisation (if there is one)?**

16-24  
25-44  
45-64  
65+  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q65. Is the person currently in charge of your organisation (if there is one) from a socially vulnerable group?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q66. Does your organisation participate in any regional, national or European network?**

Yes  
No  
Don't know/no opinion

**Q67. What are the benefits from your participation in a social and solidarity economy network?**

Access to useful information  
Learning from other SSE organisations  
Learning from other organisations  
Personal support and relationships  
Business advice  
Economic and business growth  
Visibility/promoting supporting policies  
Don't know/no opinion  
Other (please specify)

**Q68. According to which principles do you choose suppliers and co-workers? [multiple response allowed]**

According to criteria related to environmental responsibility  
According to the existing labour relations  
According to the quality of their products/services  
Because they provide us with best prices  
Because they provide us with prices fair for both producers and consumers  
Because we share the same vision for economy  
Because we share the same political vision  
Because we participate at the same network  
Because they are members in other well-known cooperative networks  
Because they are prestigious in the sector  
Because their products are locally produced  
Don't know/no opinion

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Other (please specify)

**Q69. Do you expect to grow your work in the coming year?**

Yes

No

Don't know/no opinion

**Q70. How does your organisation plan on achieving growth over the next year?**

Increasing sales with existing customers

Diversifying into new markets

Expanding into new geographic areas

Developing new products and services

Attracting new customers or clients

Replicating or spreading work

Attracting investment or finance to expand

Merging with another organisation

Winning business as part of a consortium

Don't know/no opinion

Other (please specify)

**Q71. What are the major barriers your organisation faces?**

Obtaining grants

Obtaining other forms of finance

Cash flow

Recruiting staff or volunteers

Shortage of business skills

Time pressures

Lack of access to business support and advice

Lack of awareness of social and solidarity enterprises in Greece

Government regulations and administrative burdens

Availability of suitable premises and workspace

Poor commissioning and procurement of public services

Don't know/no opinion

Other (please specify)

**Q72. Do you find potential for the development of SSE enterprises and social enterprises in your sector?**

Yes

No

Don't know/no opinion

**Q73. Do you find potential for the development of SSE enterprises and social enterprise in your region?**

Yes

No

Don't know/no opinion

**Q74. Do you think that public policies contribute to the development of SSE enterprises and social enterprises?**

Yes

No

Don't know/no opinion

**Q75. What is the main challenge for the growth of SSE enterprises and social enterprises in your region or sector?  
(up to three responses)**

Lack of awareness

Accessing appropriate finance

Poor commissioning and procurement from the public sector

Lack of capacity and time

Lack of appropriate business skills

Difficulty in recruiting and finding the right people

Lack of access to advice and business support

Regulations/administrative burdens  
 Finding the right premises or workspace  
 Lack of creativity in the younger generation  
 Lack of a tradition of cooperation  
 Don't know/no opinion  
 Other (please specify)

**Q76. If you wish to be informed of the results of the survey and about the further actions of this programme you are kindly requested to fill in your contact details.**

**Q77. If you are happy to be contacted again by any of the partners on this project, please indicate here.**

Yes, I would like that  
 No, I wouldn't like that

## Appendix 2: Social enterprise inclusion and categorisation

Criteria	Question	Approach to social enterprise classification
<b>PRIMARY CRITERIA: legal status</b>	How would you describe your entity? a) As an SSE entity with legal status b) As an SSE entity without legal status	Entities choosing 'a' are answering a different set of questions to those that answer 'b'
<b>PRIMARY CRITERIA: self-identification</b>	Which of the following choices fits best to your entity? (identical in both formal and informal entities) Social enterprise SSE entity Volunteer based organisation NGO Organization based on mutual aid N/A Other	Entities choosing their status independently allow for further elaboration on initial categorization and classification.
<b>PRIMARY CRITERIA: characteristics</b>	Which of the following characteristics does your organisation have? (identical in both formal and informal entities) Legal status Informal group Democratic control from members Non-monetary activities Commercial activity Rules about the re-distribution of profit Defined social/environmental/community benefit Economic independence from the state N/A	Entities choosing their basic characteristics allow for a stronger understanding of the different variations within the SSE

## Appendix 3: Additional laws of relevance

Policy type	Policy name	Relevance to SSE
Law and legislative decree	Law 31/1967 and legislative decree 227/1973	These laws are from the period of the military regime which attempted to cancel the administrative and supervisory boards of the cooperatives.
Legislative decree	66/1974	The boards that were abolished with the aforementioned acts were returned with this law.
Law	921/1979	A new and specialised law governing the organisation and operation of agricultural cooperatives. This law replaced Act 602/1915.
Law	Law 1257/1982	To restore the democratic functioning of Cooperative Organizations
Law	1541/1985	Supported government intervention in cooperatives by setting out too much detail with regard to the internal organisation of the cooperatives.
Law	2169/1993	This act increased the autonomy of cooperatives by enabling them to regulate most of their internal affairs. Reduced the number of members needed to set up a cooperative from 50 to 20.
Law	2181/1994	This law helped to restrain the freedom of cooperatives and the electoral system of combinations. At the same time, the incompatibility between elected members of the parliament/mayors and cooperative administration was removed.
Law	2810/2000	Promoted the entrepreneurial nature of the cooperative by calling for their equal treatment in relation to other commercial enterprises. (two laws were later introduced, 3399/2005 and 3508/2006, which contained small changes).
Law	4015/2011	With this law the agricultural cooperative unions and federations were required to merge into a primary cooperative or to transform into a stock company, since the agricultural cooperatives of the second and third tiers were abolished.
Law	L. 4277/2014	The problematic adoption of L. 4015/2011 as well as the sharp criticism from academics and practitioners led to its amendment before being in force for even three years. L. 4277/2014 was introduced, which decreased the minimum membership for every agricultural cooperative from 20 to ten people, as well as the minimum capital base from €30,000 to €10,000.
Law	4384/2016	Prescribed the participation of members-investors without voting rights. Another provision was the obligation to hire a general manager for agricultural cooperatives with a turnover over €1,000,000 as well as the regulation of agricultural cooperatives' auditing according to laws applied to various enterprises.

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## Appendix 4: Focus group and interview participants

### Focus group Athens

Name of participant	Organisation
Takis Siabanis	Margarita
Giannis Bistas	Margarita
Aris Konstantinidis	Ethelon
Thanasis Vratimos	GIVMED
Lina Mourgi	DOCK
Marina Sigala	European Village
Panagiotis Birdy	Birdland
Christos Alefantis	Sxedia
Kostas Mavrias	Cinergies

### Focus group Thessaloniki

Name of participant	Organisation
Lazaros Aggelou	PROSKALO
Kostas Nikolaou	Cooperative for Waste Management
Michalis Tremopoulos	Social Energy Cooperative
Eirini Tzekou	Bioscoop
Antonis Karagiorgas	Biocoop
Dionisis Korsianos	Ionian Recycle Hellas
Chrysanthi Pantou	Ioanin Recycle Hellas
Elisavet	Allos Tropos
Kostas Marioglou	Kinisi 136
Aspa Papafilipou	Popular University of Thessaloniki

### Focus group Karditsa

Name of participant	Organisation
Manoukas Nikos	Stevia Cooperative
Giotakos Kostas	Hellenic association for photovoltaic
Kontaksis Giorgos	ESEK urban cooperative
Kapsaskis Dimitris	Romvos Koin.S.Ep.
Katsaros Evangelos	Oikosfaira
Fotis Aleksakos	Mayor of Karditsa
Sotiria Mpakalakou	SSE coordinator of the Municipality of Karditsa
Dimitris Malkas	Pulses agricultural cooperative
Sotiris Kistamis	SCE Hlakati
Dina and Keti Velesiotou	Women's Center
Maria Barbatsalou	SCE Roda
Panagiotis Tournavitis	Cooperative Bank Karditsa

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## Focus group Herakleion

<b>Name of participant</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Manolis Britzolakis	Commons Lab
Tonia Aravantinou	Social Grocery
Ksenia Veloglou	Social Care group
Dionisis Kokonis	Social Space – Kalokairinou Charity Institute
Despoina Thohari	En kihs
Angelki Daskalaki	En Kihsi
Despoina Singelaki	President of KOISPE

## Support structures and initiatives involved

<b>Name of participant</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Sofia Adam and Olga Drosou	Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Greece
Apostolis Papalexiou	Solidarity Mission
Cristina Papadopoulou	Festival for SSE
Konstantina Zoehrer	Researcher on SSE
Elena Labrou	Greek Impact Hub SE coordinator and general manager
Dimitris Kitsikopoulos	Energy Cooperative Electra
Antonis Karagiorgas	Bioscoop, Perka
Kostas Karas	Solidarity Piraeus
Giorgos Keranis	Athens Development and Destination Management Agency - Epixhiro Koinonika
Cristina Doiranli	Member and accountant of actors Allos Tropos, Koukouli and Agroeconomy in Thessaloniki
Chantzantonis Dimitrios	Stegi SEV
Bellis Vassileios	Executive of Karditsa Development Company
Ziomas Dimitrios	National Center for Social Studies
Jenny Gouki	CSA
Unknown Name	Member of Koin.S.Ep. Akyvernites Politeies









