

**RESULTS
OF THE CONSULTATION
WITH THE SOCIAL
ECONOMY SECTOR**



**CASES
2026**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the main results of the public consultation carried out by CASES in the context of the preparation of the National Strategy for the Social Economy.

Profile and representativeness of participation: thematic consistency

With more than one thousand accesses recorded, effective contributions (total or partial) were obtained for around 29% of valid responses. Despite a limited response rate to the open-ended questions, the contributions collected reveal strong thematic consistency and make it possible to identify structural priorities widely shared across the sector.

Participation was predominantly ensured by Social Economy entities (80%), with a predominance of Private Institutions of Social Solidarity (IPSS) or equivalent organisations and a strong concentration in the field of social intervention. This lends empirical robustness to the conclusions, while also suggesting a potential bias towards the needs of this particular sub-segment.

The geographical distribution reveals national coverage, including urban, peri-urban and low-density territories. However, participation is concentrated in coastal districts, suggesting asymmetries in mobilisation and participatory capacity.

Main challenges and needs: an interdependent critical core

The results highlight an interdependent critical core of challenges and needs related to financial sustainability, the valorisation and retention of human resources, institutional recognition, bureaucracy and regulation, cooperation between organisations, as well as the digital transition. Demographic pressures and territorial inequalities further reinforce the need for more integrated and territorially adapted responses.

Areas of current and future impact: from the “social pillar” to a “laboratory of innovation”

The consultation distinguishes between areas of already consolidated impact — such as social services, childhood, ageing and health — and emerging strategic areas, including active ageing, housing, mental health, social innovation, the ecological transition and digitalisation. These are understood as a necessary evolution of traditional responses and as areas dependent on structural conditions that enable modernisation and scaling.

Priority dimensions for the Strategy: convergence around three central pillars

The analysis of strategic priorities reveals a clear convergence around three central pillars: access to financing, strengthening the recognition of the sector, and the capacity-building of human resources. Complementary dimensions include social innovation, regional and local promotion, and digital modernisation.

Priority capacity-building measures: the ambition of an integrated ecosystem

Proposed measures converge around eight capacity-building axes which, taken together, point to a central conclusion: the sector requires a structured capacity-building ecosystem based on skills development, continuous technical support, sustainability-oriented financing, technological modernisation and a coherent institutional framework.

Coordination mechanisms: multi-actor, territorial and data-supported governance

In the area of coordination, there is a prevailing perception that existing mechanisms are insufficiently operational and have limited influence on public policy. Responses advocate a more structured multi-actor governance model, based on strengthening national bodies (such as CNES), interministerial coordination, permanent territorial structures, co-creation methodologies, digital platforms, robust data systems and formal articulation with the private sector.

Communication plan: public literacy, policy influence and resource mobilisation

In terms of communication, the general public emerges as the main priority audience, followed by public decision-makers, businesses and investors, internal stakeholders and young people. The central objective should be to strengthen knowledge, recognition and trust in the Social Economy, overcoming assistentialist narratives, while also influencing policies, mobilising resources and promoting internal cohesion within the sector.

Expected outcomes: structural strengthening and demonstrable impact

The expected outcomes of a National Strategy for the Social Economy should translate into an agenda for structural transformation based on financial sustainability, the valorisation of human resources, modernisation and digitalisation, increased social and territorial impact, strengthened cooperation and enhanced public recognition of the sector. Monitoring should rely on economic indicators, human resource indicators, organisational modernisation, social impact and institutional visibility.

Conclusion

Overall, the consultation demonstrates a convergent vision regarding the need to consolidate and professionalise the sector, ensuring adequate financing, modernisation and demonstrable impact. The conclusions show strong coherence with the orientations identified by the OECD, reinforcing the robustness of the priorities now systematised, which will serve as the structural basis for the definition, implementation and monitoring of the National Strategy for the Social Economy.

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTATION

This document presents the main results of the public consultation promoted by CASES – Cooperative António Sérgio for Social Economy, which took place between **6 October and 30 November 2025**.

The initiative was carried out within the framework of the international project “**Supporting the development of the Social Economy as a driver of growth**”, developed by the European Commission (Reform and Investment Task Force – SG REFORM), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), CASES and the Directorate-General for Social Security (DGSS).

Launched in June 2025, this project aims to support Portugal — alongside Croatia, France, Greece and Wallonia (Belgium) — in strengthening the structural conditions necessary for the development of the Social Economy, through a collaborative approach.

In Portugal, the project focuses on defining, in a participatory and evidence-based manner, strategic priorities, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, consultation instruments and a communication plan that strengthens the role of the Social Economy in sustainable and inclusive development.

In this context, the public consultation aimed to gather contributions from across the Social Economy ecosystem — including sector organisations, experts, institutional representatives and individual citizens — with a view to identifying **challenges, needs, opportunities and concrete proposals** for the future of the sector in Portugal.

2. METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The consultation included, for all participants, 8 open-ended questions and 1 closed question.

The **8 open-ended questions** sought to capture: the main challenges and most pressing needs; the areas in which the Social Economy sector has the greatest impact; the priority dimensions to be integrated into a strategy; the most relevant measures to strengthen the capacity of the Social Economy; the coordination and consultation mechanisms to be created or reinforced; the priority target audiences for a communication plan; and the main outcomes expected from a strategy for the sector.

The analysis of the responses to these questions was based on a **lexicological analysis**, which made it possible to identify the **predominant ideas** through thematic grouping, to highlight the main topics referred to by participants. The analysis also aimed to identify **less prominent trends** and/or singular ideas proposed by participants.

The **closed question** focused on identifying and classifying, through a Likert scale, the **priority areas to be included in the national strategy**, including an “**other**” option to complement the list of proposed areas.

The analysis of the results sought to capture the **overall vision of participants** regarding the future of the Social Economy in Portugal. However, variations in responses according to the specific

characteristics of participants (type of entity, field of activity and type of territory) were also considered and highlighted, **when sufficiently significant**, to draw additional conclusions.

3. PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

A total of 1,203 accesses to the consultation platform were recorded, although 340 individuals or organisations did not complete any fields.

Of the total responses obtained (863), all of which included identification details, only **29% contained contributions to the questions posed** (either fully or partially). The analysis of the elements relating to challenges, needs, opportunities and concrete proposals identified by participants is therefore based on these responses.

It is thus observed that, despite the significant number of accesses to the platform, only a portion of participants chose to respond to the open-ended questions of the consultation. Nevertheless, the volume and quality of the contributions collected make it possible to identify clear trends, cross-cutting concerns and consistent proposals, which underpin the analysis presented in the following chapters.

Type of participant

The typology of participants providing contributions shows that **80% are actors from the Social Economy**. This result confirms the interest and active engagement of Social Economy organisations in strategic planning and public policy processes that concern them.

The distribution of participants also demonstrates broad representation of the different families of the Social Economy in Portugal, including associations, cooperatives, foundations, Holy Houses of Mercy (“misericórdias”), Mutual societies, Private Institutions of Social Solidarity (IPSS) and other entities such as representative structures (federations and confederations). This institutional diversity contributes to a plurality of perspectives, reflecting the heterogeneity of the sector in terms of missions, organisational models and areas of intervention.

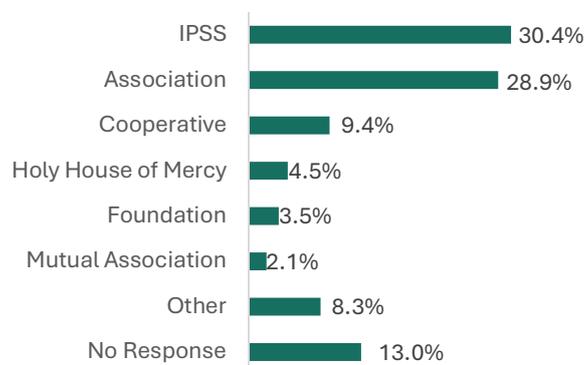


Figure 1
Institutional distribution of participants in the public consultation

It should be noted that 30% of participants identified themselves as IPSS, without it being possible to determine the legal nature of the organisation. Considering, however, the characteristics of holy houses of mercy and mutual associations, and the fact that some entities identified themselves by combining their legal nature with the possession of special legal statuses, it can be estimated that **around 49% of participants hold IPSS status or an equivalent status**. In this regard, there is a particularly high representation of entities with this status, a circumstance that may influence the results obtained and should therefore be taken into consideration in their interpretation, especially given that only around 7% of the national sector is composed of entities of this nature.

Other relevant profiles were also recorded, albeit in smaller proportions, namely representatives from the public administration, entities from the scientific and research system, individual experts and private individuals. This broader participation reinforces the open nature of the consultation and makes it possible to incorporate contributions from outside the sector that are relevant for a systemic perspective on its development.

Field of Activity

The analysis of the main fields of activity of respondents reveals a strong concentration in **social support**, which accounts for more than half of the responses. This result is consistent with the profile of participants in the consultation, largely composed of IPSS, whose mission focuses on the provision of community-based social services aimed at vulnerable populations, including children, older people, persons with disabilities and families at risk.

The residual category “**Other**” brings together a heterogeneous set of activities, including, among others, strategic consultancy, volunteering and cultural activities.

These data confirm that the public consultation was largely driven by entities with direct intervention in the social field, reflecting the centrality of this domain within the Portuguese Social Economy, while also highlighting the presence of a broad range of other activities that reinforce the sector’s role as an agent of social, economic and territorial development.

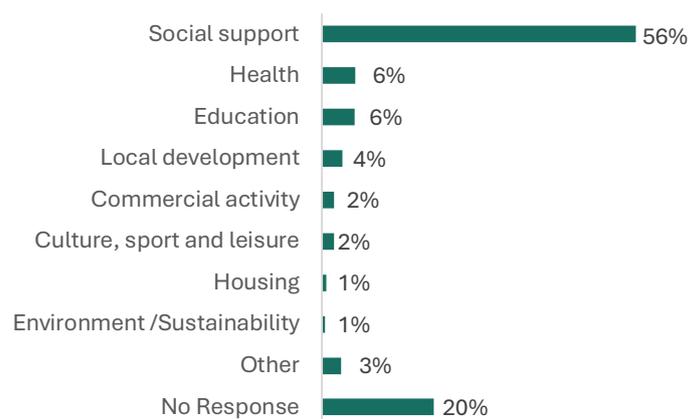


Figure 2

Distribution of participants in the public consultation by area of activity

Geographical Distribution

The responses show nationwide coverage, including urban areas, peri-urban areas and low-density territories. This **territorial diversity** is particularly relevant given the structural role played by the Social Economy in territorial cohesion, the provision of proximity-based services and the response to social needs across different contexts.

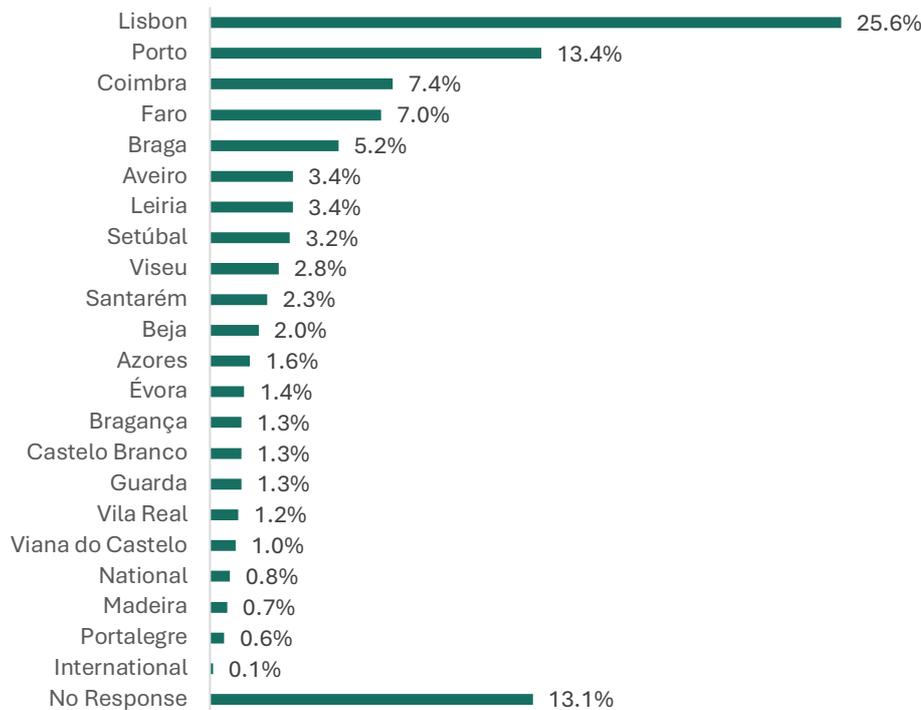


Figure 3
Geographical distribution of participants in the public consultation

Comparing this geographical distribution with the known distribution of the Social Economy sector in Portugal, based on the official data of the Social Economy Satellite Account (SESA) ¹, several relevant asymmetries emerge. Some districts such as Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra and Faro appear over-represented, suggesting a **higher level of mobilisation among actors located in urban areas and/or in regions with greater institutional density and organisational capacity**.

Conversely, there is a general under-representation of inland districts and lower population density territories, as well as of the Autonomous Regions. This trend may reflect structural constraints on participation, namely lower institutional capacity, reduced proximity to national consultation processes, or limitations in human and technical resources.

Despite these differences, **participation shows broad territorial coverage**, capturing contributions from different regional realities, albeit with a relatively higher weight from metropolitan and coastal territories.

¹ 2023 edition with data from 2019 and 2020, available at: <https://www.cases.pt/contasatelitedaes/>

Overall, the profile of participants provides robustness and legitimacy to the results of the public consultation, ensuring that the conclusions drawn are largely grounded in the direct experience and accumulated knowledge of actors who are actively engaged in and experience the Social Economy in Portugal on a daily basis. However, given the over-representation of entities with IPSS status or equivalent status, a potential bias towards the needs of this subgroup of the Social Economy in Portugal should be considered.

4. MAIN CHALLENGES AND NEEDS

- 2.1. *In your perspective, what are the main challenges currently facing the social economy sector in Portugal?*
- 2.2. *What are the most pressing needs of social economy entities, which deserve to be addressed in the definition of the national strategy?*

The analysis of the responses received made it possible to group the main challenges identified by participants into **eight categories**, with it being clear that the challenges highlighted are **highly interdependent**.

Financial sustainability and **human resources** constitute the critical core of the sector, consistently appearing in connection with difficulties in maintaining activities, governance challenges and an inability to undertake medium- and long-term planning.

The **deficit in visibility and institutional recognition**, **excessive bureaucracy and inadequate legislation**, and **weak interinstitutional cooperation** further reinforce the fragmentation of the sector and limit its capacity for strategic positioning. At the same time, **digital transformation** is frequently identified as both a priority and an aspiration for the future, although it has not yet been widely implemented in the day-to-day practice of most organisations.

Finally, **demographic pressures** and **territorial inequalities** represent structural stress factors, aggravating existing vulnerabilities and requiring more integrated, territorially grounded and sustainable responses.



Figure 4
Distribution of responses by type of challenge identified

It should be noted that the analysis by institutional family reveals **convergence in the structural challenges facing the sector**, particularly regarding financial sustainability. However, differences in emphasis can be observed depending on the organisational model. Entities providing direct social services, such as IPSS and the majority of associations, show greater sensitivity to issues of financial sustainability and demographic pressures, while foundations and cooperatives display stronger concerns regarding professionalisation and the regulatory framework

From a territorial perspective, no significant regional divisions are identified in relation to the main challenges. Nevertheless, demographic pressures, territorial inequalities and digitalisation appear more prominently in inland territories and in the Autonomous Regions.

In turn, it is observed that the main needs identified by the sector are closely aligned with the challenges highlighted, with the foremost priority being the need to ensure **financial sustainability through more stable, appropriate, predictable and diversified funding models**. These should enable the continuity of services, medium- and long-term planning and organisational investment.

Closely associated with this is the need for the **valorisation and capacity-building of human resources**, reflecting persistent difficulties in recruitment, retention and skills development, as well as the urgency of the **professionalisation** of management as a critical factor in strengthening the quality, efficiency and impact of interventions.

Participants also underline the need for **greater institutional recognition** and for the integration of the Social Economy into public policies, moving beyond what is still an excessively instrumental relationship with the State. There is also a strong call for the **reduction of bureaucracy and the simplification** of legal and administrative frameworks.

The strengthening of **interinstitutional cooperation, digitalisation and technological modernisation**, as well as the need to adapt responses and resources to **demographic pressures and territorial inequalities**, also emerge as relevant needs, particularly as enabling conditions for more integrated, innovative and territorially adapted responses.

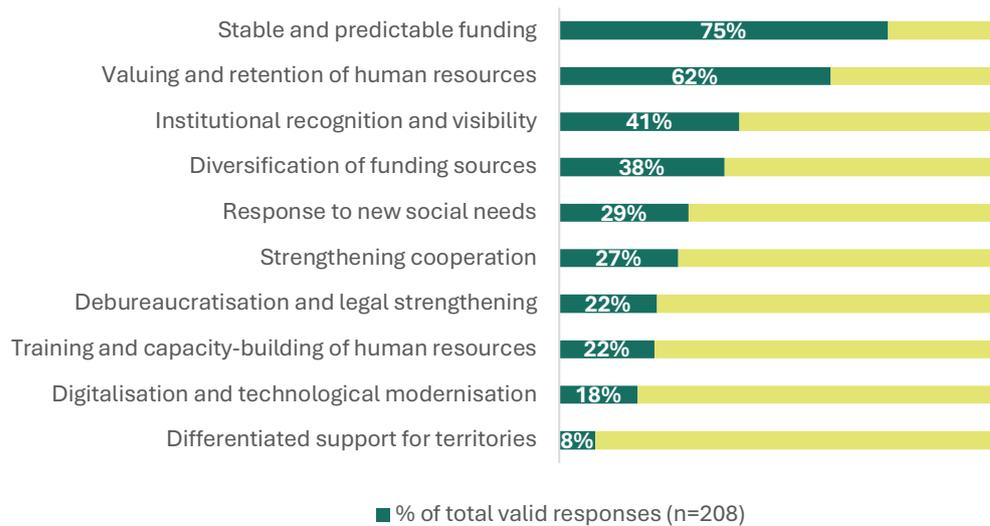


Figure 5
Distribution of responses by type of need identified

Regarding needs, there is a **clear convergence across all institutional families in the priority attributed to stable and predictable funding**. Differences emerge mainly in secondary priorities: associations, mutual organisations and IPSS highlight the valorisation and retention of human resources; holy houses of mercy place a strong additional emphasis on training and capacity-building alongside the valorisation and retention of staff; cooperatives emphasise the diversification of funding sources; and foundations attach greater importance to institutional recognition and visibility.

At the territorial level, **financing and human resources remain cross-cutting priorities**. The most notable variations relate to institutional recognition, the strengthening of cooperation and the need for differentiated support for territories, with a stronger incidence in the Autonomous Regions and in areas of lower population density.

In summary, the analysis reveals a strong alignment between challenges and needs, highlighting a set of structural and interdependent constraints that require integrated medium- and long-term responses within the framework of the National Strategy for the Social Economy, which can be summarised in the following **table**:

Table 1
Main **Challenges** and **Needs** identified in the public consultation process

Key Challenges		Key Needs	
D1 Financial sustainability and maladjusted financing models	The most transversal challenge is related to the financial fragility of Social Economy organizations, marked by strong dependence on public funding, insufficient contributions in relation to real costs, delays in payments and financing excessively oriented to short-term projects. This situation limits strategic planning, continuity of responses and investment in innovation, infrastructure and human resources.	N1 Stable, adequate and predictable funding	Cross-cutting and dominant need, for multiannual financing models that allow strategic planning, investment and continuity of longer-term responses, and for updating values in relation to real costs (salaries, energy, food), as well as the training of organizations for financial management and strengthening their autonomy (Other associated challenges: D4)
	While there is strong pressure to innovate, many participants also report that funding models and excessive focus on "new projects" make it difficult to consolidate and scale proven responses. The absence of funding for growth, replication and institutionalisation thus limits the systemic impact of social innovation.	N2 Diversification of funding sources and appropriate financial instruments	In addition to strengthening public funding, participants underline the need for access to hybrid (public-private) finance, impact investing, patronage, ethical credit lines and financial instruments adapted to the non-profit or hybrid nature of Social Economy entities. (Other associated challenges: D3, D4)
D2 Scarcity, valorization, retention and training of human resources	The difficulty in recruiting, retaining and valuing qualified professionals arises very consistently, associated with uncompetitive salaries, absence of recognized careers, high turnover and emotional exhaustion. The problem is particularly acute in areas of direct care (elderly, disability, childhood, mental health) and in inland territories.	N3 Valuing and retaining human resources	A very recurrent need, associated with low salaries, difficulty in recruitment and retention, absence of own careers, aging of teams and emotional exhaustion. It also includes the need for social and institutional recognition of work in the sector (e.g. the need to revise the status of voluntary manager). (Other associated challenges: D3, D5, D7, D8)
	There is also frequent reference to governance models based on poorly trained volunteer leaders, aging leadership and distance between governing bodies and technical teams. The lack of skills in strategic management, financial planning, leadership and impact assessment in leaders is seen as a structural obstacle to the sustainability and modernization of the sector.	N4 Capacity building and training of managers and teams	Need for structured investment in continuous and specialized training, especially in areas such as management, leadership, social innovation, digitalization, impact assessment, fundraising and governance, avoiding isolated or merely instrumental approaches. (Other associated challenges: D7)
D3 Lack of institutional recognition and public appreciation	The Social Economy continues to be perceived, according to the participants, in a reductive and welfare-based way, with little recognition and media about its economic, social and territorial contribution. This invisibility, not only for the population, but also in public and private institutions, affects the appreciation of professionals, the priority in public policies and the ability to mobilize private partnerships and social investment.	N5 Institutional, political and social recognition of the sector	The participants point out the need for greater recognition of the structuring role of the Social Economy, including its effective integration in the definition of public policies, the creation of a public entity to support and promote the sector, the enhancement of the impact generated, improvement of public visibility, of existing information, including greater knowledge of the social

Key Challenges		Key Needs	
			impact of the entities, and clarification of concepts (Social Economy, social enterprise). They also point out the need to integrate the Social Economy into school and vocational training programmes and to encourage the active participation of people in volunteering and social innovation projects. (Other associated challenges: D1, D6)
D4 Excessive bureaucracy and inadequate legal framework	Participants repeatedly point out the complexity of administrative processes, applications and reporting, as well as legal and regulatory requirements that are not adjusted to the size and nature of the entities. The fragmentation of the legal and fiscal framework and the rigidity of the typified responses appear as obstacles to innovation and adaptation to the real needs of communities.	N6 Administrative simplification and legal reinforcement	There is a strong need to reduce bureaucracy in the application, reporting, licensing and inspection processes, as well as to harmonize between public entities, reducing duplication and freeing up resources for social intervention itself. Need to develop a legal and regulatory framework that considers the specific characteristics of entities in the sector, including aspects such as the regulation of the Basic Law (e.g. tax status and database), the need to facilitate access to public procurement and the introduction of a social enterprise statute. (Other associated challenges: D1, D3, D6)
D5 Demographic pressure and increasing complexity of social needs	The aging of the population, the increase in dependency, the emergence of mental health, housing and new social vulnerabilities put increasing pressure on already fragile organizations. Many contributions report that existing responses do not keep up with the complexity and diversity of current needs.	N7 Responding to new social needs and demographic pressures	Need to adapt social responses to population ageing, mental health, housing, migration, emerging poverty and new forms of exclusion, through more flexible, person-centred and community-based models, with a corresponding need to strengthen resources and support for social innovation. (Other associated challenges: D1, D2, D8)
D6 Fragmentation of the sector and weak cooperation and coordination between entities	Many contributions highlight the dispersion of efforts, the competition between entities for funding, the weak networking of other organisations in the sector and the State, and the lack of concerted strategies at territorial or sectoral level. This fragmentation reduces efficiency, hinders integrated responses and weakens the sector's capacity for political influence.	N8 Strengthening cooperation and networking	Need to overcome the fragmentation of the sector, promoting cooperation networks between entities, partnerships with the State, municipalities, companies, universities and other actors, as well as models for sharing resources, services and knowledge. Recognition of the sector as an interlocutor in the formulation and implementation of specific public policies (Other associated challenges: D3)
D7 Insufficient and uneven digitalization	The digital transition emerges as a cross-cutting challenge, associated with the lack of financial resources, digital skills, infrastructure and technical support. This limitation affects internal efficiency, external communication, impact measurement and the ability to access funding and collaborative networks and is more pronounced in small organizations and in low-density territories.	N9 Digitalização, modernização tecnológica e capacitação digital	Need for technical and financial support for the digital transition, including management systems, data interoperability, impact measurement, communication and technological innovation, ensuring that small entities or entities in less favoured territories are not excluded. (Other associated challenges: D1, D2, D5, D8)

Key Challenges		Key Needs	
D8 Territorial inequalities	There is a recurrent reference to the increased difficulties of inland territories and low-density regions: less access to financing, greater scarcity of human resources, aging infrastructures and less institutional visibility, aggravating regional asymmetries.	N10 Differentiated support to the territories	Need for differentiated policies and funding for low-density territories, autonomous regions and rural contexts, recognizing increased costs, recruitment difficulties and the central role of Social Economy entities in territorial cohesion. (Other associated challenges: D1, D2, D5)

5. AREAS OF ACTIVITY WHERE THE SOCIAL ECONOMY HAS THE GREATEST IMPACT

2.3. *In which areas of activity do you consider that the social economy sector has the greatest positive impact today? In which areas of activity do you consider that the social economy has the greatest potential for future development?*

There is a clear differentiation between areas of consolidated impact and areas of future strategic potential. The current impact of the Social Economy is mainly focused on **social action and inclusion, ageing, childhood and health**, reflecting its historical function of responding to basic and structural social needs.

At the same time, the participants point to a broadening of the sector's strategic horizon, with strong growth expectations in areas such as **active ageing, housing, mental health, social innovation, ecological transition and digitalisation**. These areas are seen not as a replacement for traditional responses, but as a necessary evolution to respond to increasingly complex demographic, social, technological and environmental challenges.

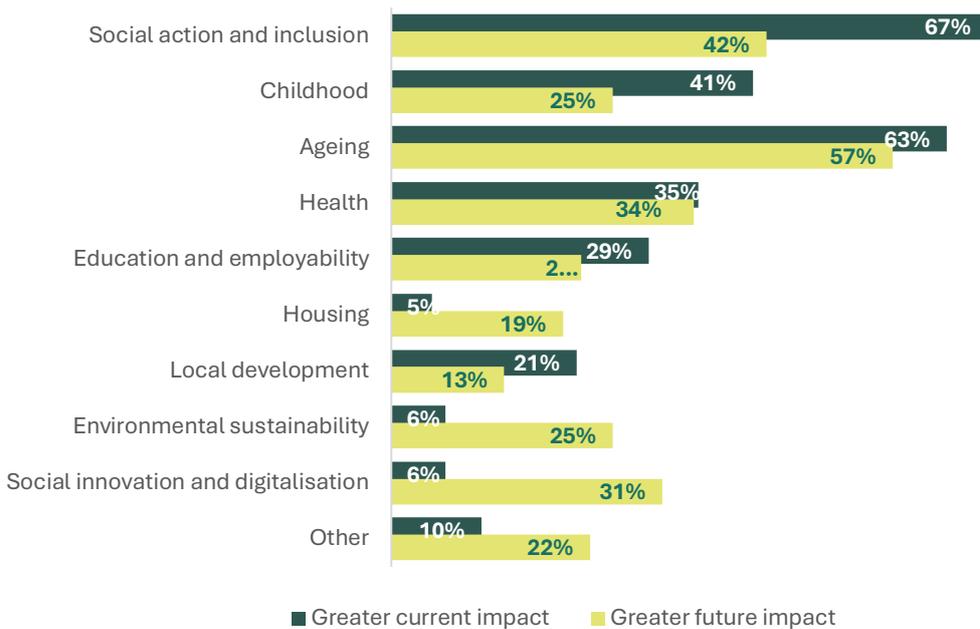


Figure 6

Distribution of responses by areas of activity where the Social Economy has the greatest impact, present and future (% of total valid responses, n=196)

It should be noted that these results are very much in line with the conclusions of the Special Eurobarometer 567² - "The Social Economy in the lives of Europeans", where it was concluded that, according to the Portuguese, the sector where Social Economy organizations make the biggest difference is in Health and social support and where they have the greatest social or community

² Available at: <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/3356>

impact is in the field of poverty reduction and in the provision of health care and services. The Eurobarometer showed, however, a greater emphasis on housing, which in this consultation appears mainly as an area of future impact.

In short, the Social Economy is perceived simultaneously as a pillar of social protection and as a laboratory of innovation for the future, provided that structural conditions of sustainability, empowerment and institutional recognition are created. The main areas of activity, present and its future potential, can be summarized in the following **table**:

Table 2

Areas of Activity with the greatest current and future impact identified in the public consultation process

Main Areas of Activity	
A1 Social action, inclusion and the fight against poverty	<p>It is, practically unanimously, the area with the greatest current positive impact of the Social Economy. It includes food support, social emergency, integration of vulnerable groups, homelessness, migrants, people with disabilities and families in poverty. The sector is recognized as an essential pillar of the welfare state, completing the role of the state and reaching where the state and the market do not reach.</p> <p>Future potential: maintenance of the central role, with a greater focus on prevention, integration and autonomy. In particular, the integration of vulnerable groups such as migrants is particularly highlighted.</p>
A2 Childhood, youth and families	<p>A strongly consolidated area, with particular emphasis on nurseries, pre-school education, foster care, early intervention, the protection of children and young people at risk, and family support. It emerges as a strategic field both because of its current impact and its long-term preventive effect.</p> <p>Future potential: strengthening inclusive education, pedagogical innovation, positive parenting and preventing cycles of exclusion.</p>
A3 Ageing, addiction and long-term care	<p>One of the most mentioned areas, reflecting the country's central demographic challenge. It includes ERPI (Residential Structure for Elderly People), SAD (home support service), day centres, long-term care, home support, informal caregivers and alternative models (cohousing, collaborative residences).</p> <p>Future potential: considered very high given the aging of the Portuguese population, with an appeal to new humanized, community, preventive and technologically supported models.</p>
A4 Health, mental health and well-being	<p>An area recognized as complementary and, in many contexts, structuring in the face of NHS gaps, especially in long-term care, community mental health, rehabilitation, palliative care and prevention. Mental health emerges particularly consistently as an emerging area.</p> <p>Future potential: the main areas of growth pointed out are mental health, the expansion of community responses, social-health integration, prevention and health literacy, insurance and social pharmacies.</p>

Main Areas of Activity	
A5 Education, training and employability	<p>It includes formal and non-formal education, vocational training, socio-professional inclusion, social enterprises and sheltered employment. It is seen both as an area of impact and as a transversal instrument for inclusion and economic development.</p> <p>Future potential: alignment with digital and green transitions, social entrepreneurship and qualification of vulnerable audiences.</p>
A6 Housing and residential responses	<p>Less dominant area in the current impact, but very prominent as a future potential, in response to the housing crisis. It includes affordable housing, housing cooperatives, assisted residences, models of autonomous living and intermediate solutions between institutionalization and abandonment.</p> <p>Future potential: high, especially in community-based, cooperative and integrated models with social services.</p>
A7 Local development, territorial cohesion and citizenship	<p>The Social Economy is widely recognized as a territorial anchor, especially in rural and low-density areas. It includes community dynamism, local culture, civic participation, volunteering and heritage preservation.</p> <p>Future potential: strengthening the role as a driver of territorial cohesion, local governance and endogenous development through co-creation and establishment of local partnerships.</p>
A8 Environmental sustainability, circular economy and green transition	<p>An area that is still emerging in the current impact, but with strong recognition as a strategic area for the future. It includes circular economy, community renewable energy, social farming, waste management and green projects with social impact.</p> <p>Future potential: high, associated with the creation of green jobs and the just transition.</p>
A9 Social innovation, digitalisation and new models	<p>Cross-sectional area, often associated with the future of the sector. It includes organisational innovation, digital platforms, social technology (<i>tech for good</i>), impact assessment, new models of care, social enterprises, youth entrepreneurship and hybrid models. Participants in the consultation tend to consider that the Social Economy is in a privileged position to serve as a bridge between technological innovation and social innovation.</p> <p>Future potential: very high, conditional on training, financing and institutional framework.</p>
A10 Other	<p>It includes less frequent or very specific areas: sport, justice, ethical finance, social tourism, arts, combating disinformation, democracy, etc. Although less expressive in frequency, they illustrate the diversity and plasticity of the sector.</p>

6. PRIORITY DIMENSIONS TO BE INTEGRATED INTO A NATIONAL STRATEGY

- 2.4. *What should be the priority areas to be integrated into the national strategy?*
- 2.5. *What other priority areas do you consider to be relevant to promote and strengthen the Social Economy sector?*

Considering the priority dimensions to be integrated into the future National Strategy for the Social Economy, the responses to the public consultation reveal a **clear hierarchy** of them, with a strong concentration in the categories of "High Priority" and "Maximum Priority" in most of the dimensions evaluated. This distribution confirms a relatively consensual view among the participants regarding the structuring areas for strengthening the sector.

Nevertheless, the dimension **"Improve access to finance"** stands out in a particularly **significant way**, which registers the highest number of classifications as a top priority, pointing to the centrality of financial sustainability as a precondition for the consolidation and growth of the Social Economy.

"Strengthen recognition of the sector" also takes a prominent position, which confirms the importance attributed to the institutional and political valorisation of the Social Economy, as well as to its more consistent integration in the processes of defining public policies and valuing it with the general public.

Closely related to this, the high priority given to **"Promote the capacity-building of human resources"** reflects the perception that the qualification, recognition and professionalisation of teams are key determinants of the quality of services and of organisational resilience. Likewise, **"Promote the Social Economy at regional and local level"** and **"Stimulate social innovation"** also register high levels of priority, confirming the importance of the territorial dimension and of the sector's capacity for renewal and adaptation.

In contrast, areas such as **"Promote the Social Economy at international level"** or **"Improve access to markets"**, although recognised as relevant, display a lower relative intensity of highest priority. This suggests that they are considered subordinate to more immediate structural challenges, namely financing, institutional recognition and human resources.

It is also important to note the contributions received under the **"Other"** category. The open responses do not tend to introduce entirely new strategic axes but rather deepen and operationalise the priorities already identified, leading to the conclusion that **the ten proposed areas broadly cover the essential aspects**. Nevertheless, several relevant subthemes emerge, including the creation of a more favourable fiscal status, the strengthening of incentives for philanthropy and social investment, the adoption of socially responsible public procurement regimes, the need for administrative simplification and the reduction of bureaucracy in processes related to registration, licensing, applications and reporting, as well as the strengthening of governance and the professionalisation of management. In addition, several responses underline the importance of impact measurement, the development of common indicators, the establishment of observatories and the production of

applied knowledge to support evidence-based public policies. Finally, a few specific thematic areas not originally included in the options — such as housing, community and mental health, ageing, poverty, childhood, disability, and sport and culture as instruments of inclusion — broaden the sectoral scope of the strategy.



Figure 7

Weighted average of priority assigned to strategic areas (1 – Not relevant to 5 – Maximum Priority)

The reading of the results considering the different institutional natures of the participants within the Social Economy sector, show a significant consensus regarding the centrality of access to financing, reinforcement of recognition and training of human resources. However, some nuances can be observed:

- **Associations, IPSS and Holy Houses of Mercy** show the highest averages in **access to financing** (4.73, 4.80 and 4.90 respectively), confirming the centrality of financial sustainability for these types of organisations.
- **Holy Houses of Mercy** also stand out in the **valorisation of the digital transition** (4.60), suggesting a concern with organisational modernisation.
- **Foundations** assign the highest priority to **strengthening the recognition of the sector** (4.89) and place the greatest emphasis on the **political and legal framework** (4.22), indicating a heightened sensitivity to institutional and strategic dimensions.
- **Cooperatives** display relatively higher averages in the **ecological transition** (4.00), **digital transition** (4.26) and **social innovation** (4.43), which may reflect a stronger orientation towards hybrid and market-based models.
- **Mutual associations** show comparatively lower priority for the **legal framework** (3.17) and **internationalisation** (2.57), maintaining their main focus on recognition and capacity-building.

Additionally, it should be noted that financing, recognition and capacity-building also emerge as cross-cutting national priorities, without significant territorial divisions. Territorial variations are more visible in the dimensions of regional/local promotion, ecological and digital transitions, and, to a lesser extent, internationalisation, with relatively greater intensity in inland territories and the Autonomous Regions. Nevertheless, these differences do not alter the overall hierarchy of priorities, which remains relatively homogeneous at national level.

In summary, this analysis confirms a strong convergence of responses around three central strategic pillars — **financing, recognition and capacity-building** — complemented by **innovation and territorialisation**, which should constitute key foundations in defining the priorities of the National Strategy for the Social Economy.

7. PRIORITY CAPACITY-BUILDING MEASURES

2.6. *What concrete measures do you consider to be priorities to strengthen the capacity building of social economy entities?*

The priority measures for the sector pointed out by the consultation seek to respond to the challenges, needs and priority dimensions pointed out in previous questions. In this sense, it is possible to organize them into **eight main axes**, summarized in the following table:

Table 3
Concrete measures considered priorities for the empowerment of the Social Economy in Portugal

Key Capacity-Building Measures	
M1 Continuous training and training	Strong focus on the need for measures that promote the professionalization of management through structured (and not one-off) programs, aimed at managers, middle management and operational teams, with practical content in leadership, sector-specific financial and accounting management, project management, quality, social communication/marketing, fundraising, public procurement, <i>compliance</i> and digital transformation. In several contributions, there is the proposal of advanced courses (including postgraduate and inter-university training), as well as flexible modalities (online, modular) and action-training accompanied in the field.
M2 Permanent and proximity technical support	Respondents call for capacity building channels, especially regional centres, that provide legal, financial, management and application advice (national and European funds), including mentoring, <i>coaching</i> and professional supervision. Here, the "continuous monitoring" measure appears as critical for small entities, which do not have the internal critical mass to respond to administrative and regulatory complexity.
M3 Capacity-building and sustainability-oriented financing	Dedicated lines are proposed for organizational modernization and hiring of specialized profiles, predictable multi-annual models, hybrid instruments (public-private/impact investment), support for energy rehabilitation/efficiency and mechanisms that ensure timely and fair

Key Capacity-Building Measures	
	payments for services. At the same time, fiscal measures are emerging to strengthen fundraising (benefits to patronage/donations, reduction of charges, credit/guarantees) and simplification of access to funds.
M4 Valuing and retaining human resources	This axis translates into career measures and working conditions closely related to the specific characteristics of entities with IPSS status or equivalent: salary review, equivalence with reference to the public sector, enhancement of categories, hiring incentives and internships/scholarships to attract qualified young people (management, economics, engineering), in addition to mechanisms for succession and generational renewal in leadership. In some responses, there is also a need to professionalize management functions and reduce dependence on managerial volunteering, as a condition for qualified management and <i>accountability</i> .
M5 Digitalization and technological modernization	In this context, several highly operational proposals emerge, including technological vouchers and funding for management software (users, treasury, human resources, CRM – Customer Relationship Management – for social services), document management and reporting platforms, interoperability with public authorities, cybersecurity, digital literacy for teams, and the adoption of technologies that enable the provision of tele-services where appropriate. Digitalisation is described as a means of reducing bureaucracy, freeing up time and improving efficiency and transparency.
M6 Structured cooperation in a network	The call is made to go beyond specific "partnerships" with the promotion of the creation of local and intermunicipal networks, thematic consortia, "networks of networks", sharing of services and resources (including purchases and shared services), communities of practice and exchange mechanisms (national and international) for the rapid dissemination of good practices. In several contributions, the network is presented as an instrument of scale, rationalization and collective learning.
M7 Measuring impact, transparency and quality	It is proposed to develop common indicators (financial and non-financial), social balance, impact reports, simplified evaluation tools, and link these instruments to funding criteria. In some cases, the idea of external audits also appears to strengthen trust and improve governance.
M8 Institutional and regulatory framework	There is a call for the review and simplification of procedures (including public procurement), clarification of roles between the State, local authorities and sector organisations, and the strengthening and territorialisation of representative structures. In some responses, there are also proposals for the creation of specific legal statuses (for example, for social enterprises and in relation to fiscal status) and for the establishment of formal mechanisms for the continuous consultation of the sector to design more tailored policy measures.

An integrated reading of the priority capacity-building measures reveals a central conclusion: the sector calls for a **structured capacity-building ecosystem** that combines professionalisation, adequate financing, technological modernisation and a coherent institutional framework.

In summary, the responses converge around proposals in which the development, strengthening and qualification of the sector depend on a combination of structured and applied training programmes, ongoing technical support, predictable financing oriented towards modernisation and human resources, institutional adjustments, digitalisation and simplification, as well as networks and impact-oriented instruments capable of enabling scale, learning and credibility for the sector.

8. COORDINATION MECHANISM

2.7. *What coordination and consultation mechanisms between the various actors (public, private, civil society) do you think should be created or strengthened?*

The aggregate reading of the responses points to a relatively convergent understanding, i.e. the existing coordination and consultation mechanisms are seen as **insufficiently operational, not very inclusive** and with **little capacity to influence the design of policies**. The sector calls for a more stable multi-stakeholder governance architecture, with different levels (national-regional-local), digital tools and a robust database to support decisions.

In terms of concrete mechanisms, seven proposals stand out:

1. **Strengthening and operationalisation of national consultation and representation structures:** many responses call for the dynamisation of the **National Council for the Social Economy (CNES)** as a permanent consultation body, with regular meetings, a clear mandate and an effective capacity to influence policies before the final consultation phase. At the same time, there is often a proposal to strengthen representative structures (confederations, federations and sectoral platforms) to increase the cohesion of the sector and avoid fragmentation. The idea of creating a single/stronger interlocutor before the Government also arises, reducing the dispersion of voices and reinforcing negotiating legitimacy.
2. **Interministerial coordination and institutional strengthening of the State for the Social Economy:** several responses point to the need for transversal coordination in the Government (Secretary of State, Directorate-General, Agency, Interministerial Delegation or Mission Structure) to align measures, reduce overlaps, reduce bureaucracy and ensure coherence between social security, health, education, employment, housing and justice policies. The rationale is related to the transversality of the sector, which requires a political coordination center with the capacity to harmonize programs and rules, and to bring regulations closer to operational reality.
3. **Territorial governance through regional and local structures with the power to act:** one of the most recurrent points are proposals for the creation or strengthening of regional and local councils of Social Economy (municipal, intermunicipal, district, NUTS III), with representation of municipalities, Intermunicipal Communities (CIM), Regional Coordination and Development Commissions (CCDR), public services, Social Economy entities, companies, academia and communities. The objective is to territorialize priorities, plan response networks, avoid duplication and ensure close coordination on the ground. At the same time, there is criticism of the operation of some local networks for being too controlled by the municipalities, so there is a call for greater autonomy, greater plurality and mechanisms of supervision and transparency.

4. **Permanent thematic mechanisms and participatory methodologies (co-creation):** the sector suggests permanent thematic working groups (such as health, aging, childhood, housing, digital transition, sustainability, inclusion, etc.) and the adoption of participatory methodologies that go beyond auscultation: shared diagnostics, ideation, prototyping, testing and post-implementation validation. The expectation is that the entities will no longer be just executors and will become co-producers of solutions and policies, with professional mediation to ensure real participation (including technicians, human resources on the ground and representatives of the beneficiaries).
5. **Digital platforms, directories and "one-stop-shop" for sharing and consultation:** national and regional digital platforms for public consultation, collection of contributions, dissemination of results, and for continuous collaboration between entities, are seen as essential for coordination and consultation. This point also includes ideas such as searchable directories with filters, mapping of needs and resources, publication of measures in consultation and creation of a "one-stop shop" for institutional articulation. The ambition is to reduce asymmetries and reduce redundancies and coordination costs.
6. **Observatories and mandatory data reporting:** closely related to the capacity for coordination and consultation is the availability of information. In this sense, the sector calls for more detailed and comparable data through the reinforcement/creation of observatories (national and regional), censuses and impact indicators, periodic reports and benchmarking. Some responses explain the difficulty of isolating data by "families" and advocate mandatory reporting to CASES for all Social Economy entities, as a condition for planning, transparency and evidence-based decision-making. Data collection and analysis is seen as critical infrastructure to give credibility to the sector and guide investment.
7. **Bridges with the private sector:** the responses also value specific mechanisms for articulation with companies and investors, such as dialogue tables with the private sector, strategic advice for impact investment, platforms for *matching* the needs of entities and business support (technical and financial), and co-financing instruments (mixed funds, bonds/contracts with social impact). In this context, the patronage law emerges as a central lever to be reinforced (limits, scopes, incentives), as well as the promotion of corporate responsibility and qualified volunteering.

In summary, the mechanisms considered necessary by the sector converge towards (i) more operational and representative national consultation bodies, (ii) inter-ministerial coordination with a clear mandate, (iii) permanent territorial structures for shared planning and decision-making, (iv) thematic groups and co-creation methodologies, (v) digital platforms for consultation and collaboration, (vi) a robust data system for evidence-based decision-making, and (vii) formal mechanisms for approaching the private sector through patronage, partnerships, and impact investment.

9. TARGET AUDIENCE FOR A COMMUNICATION PLAN AND KEY OBJECTIVES

2.8. Who should be considered the priority target audience of a communication plan for the social economy? And what should its main objectives be?

When asked about the priority target audience for a communication plan, the responses clearly indicate that priority should be given to **society at large** -understood as individual citizens, public opinion and users/consumers of the sector’s services. This suggests that the main challenge of the communication plan is to increase awareness, literacy and public recognition of the Social Economy, normalising its presence in everyday life and strengthening trust in the sector.

In second place are **policy-makers and public administration bodies** at different levels (national, regional and local), highlighting that communication should also target those responsible for defining legal frameworks, financing models and public policy priorities, thus underscoring the importance of institutional recognition and visibility.

The **business sector and investors** are also widely mentioned, reflecting the expectation that communication will help to mobilize partnerships, social investment and patronage mechanisms, reinforcing the Social Economy as a credible and professional partner.

This is followed by the **sector’s internal audience**, particularly its professionals, leaders and volunteers, pointing to the need to combine external communication with a dimension of internal cohesion, alignment and capacity-building. **Young people** also emerge as a relevant audience, including not only students at different levels of education but also schools, teachers and recent graduates, highlighting the importance participants place on generational renewal and talent attraction.

The **media and opinion leaders** appear less explicitly but are nevertheless regarded as important for strengthening the reach, reputation and narrative of the Social Economy sector. Finally, the category “**Others**” brings together more specific segments (such as vulnerable groups or particular professional or territorial communities), suggesting the usefulness of more targeted and contextual communication actions, without replacing the priority audiences identified above.

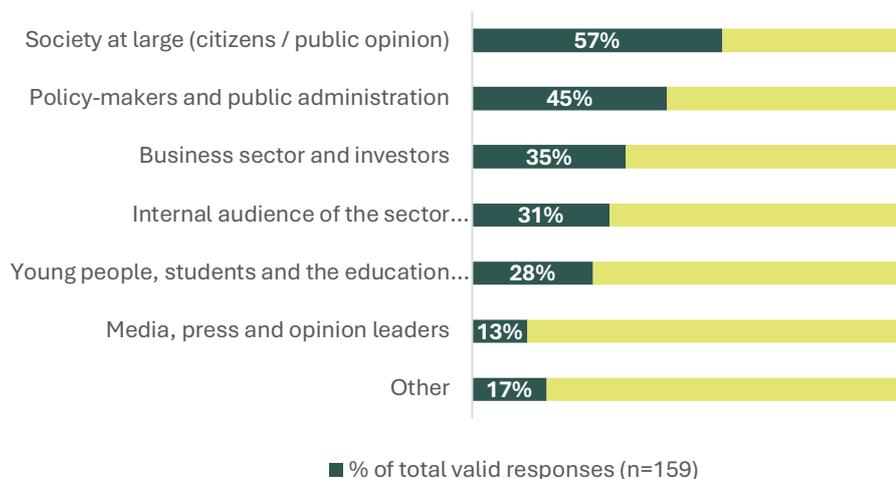


Figure 8

Distribution of responses by main target populations identified for a future communication plan for the Social Economy

In view of the most relevant target audiences, the analysis of the responses allows us to identify a relatively consistent set of strategic priorities for a Social Economy communication plan, which can be organized into **five major groups**:

1. Increase the visibility, recognition and profile of the sector:

Communication should clearly explain what the Social Economy is, its organisational diversity, its principles and values, and its economic and social weight, while challenging stereotypes associated with charity or welfare-based assistance. Several responses emphasise the importance of positioning the sector as a strategic pillar of the national economy — modern, innovative and professional — by communicating good practices and evidence on impact, employment, gross value added (GVA) and contribution to territorial cohesion.

2. Build a common identity and strengthen internal cohesion within the sector:

Several responses advocate the development or reinforcement of a unifying identity for the Social Economy, based on a positive and consistent narrative, as well as the sharing of good practices, resources and knowledge among organisations. Communication should therefore not be limited to external audiences but should also operate internally, aligning leaders, professionals and volunteers around a shared strategic narrative.

3. Influence public policy:

The communication plan should contribute to raising awareness among decision-makers, influencing public policy and ensuring more appropriate legal and financial frameworks, positioning the sector as a key partner in addressing social challenges and supporting the country's sustainable development. In this context, communication should be segmented, adapted to different territories and audiences, and oriented towards changing perceptions and behaviours rather than merely disseminating information.

4. Mobilise financial and human resources:

Many responses highlight the importance of using a communication plan to attract social investment, philanthropy and business partnerships by demonstrating the dual return (social and economic) of Social Economy initiatives. At the same time, communication should position the Social Economy as an attractive professional environment characterised by purpose, innovation and impact, capable of attracting young people and qualified talent.

5. Encourage engagement and participation:

Beyond providing information, communication should encourage behavioural change. It should explicitly promote personal involvement in organisations, encouraging volunteering, membership, responsible consumption and engagement with local communities. Emphasis should be placed on young people, fostering their involvement and supporting generational renewal in leadership.

Overall, the responses converge on the need for a strategic, segmented communication plan oriented towards changing perceptions and behaviours. The objective is not merely to raise awareness of the sector, but to position it as a central economic and social actor based on impact, transparency and professionalism. Communication should simultaneously educate, mobilise, attract talent and investment, and consolidate a strong collective identity, ensuring generational renewal and greater civic participation in Social Economy organisations.

10. EXPECTED RESULTS AND INDICATORS

2.9. What would be the main expected results of a social economy strategy? What indicators would show that the strategy was effective?

The overall analysis of the responses reveals a relatively aligned strategic vision regarding the expected outcomes of a National Strategy for the Social Economy. In summary, the sector aspires to a **structural strengthening of its sustainability, effective recognition, enhancement of human resources, organisational modernisation based on innovation and digitalisation, a measurable increase in social and territorial impact**, and greater **institutional and public recognition**.

Each of these axes is explained in greater detail in **Table 4**, which also includes examples of indicators proposed for the monitoring of results.

In summary, an effective strategy will be one that strengthens the sector's economic and organisational foundations, values its professionals, generates demonstrable social impacts supported by objective indicators and a robust monitoring and evaluation system, and ultimately leads to the consolidation of the Social Economy as a central actor in national development.

Table 4
Main expected results and indicators of a Social Economy Strategy

Main expected Results		Examples of Indicators	
Sustainability and financial autonomy	The expectation is for a sector that is less dependent on ad hoc support and more based on stable, multiannual and diversified funding. Greater generation of own-source revenues is also expected, alongside increased impact investment, the revision of cooperation agreements aligned with the real cost of services, and a reduction in structural indebtedness.	Economic and financial indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average % of own revenue in relation to the total budget • Diversification of funding sources • Volume of private investment and social impact captured • Percentage of entities with multi-annual funding • Average payment time for cooperation agreements • Cost covered ratio (>95% in some proposals) • Growth in the weight of the Social Economy in GDP/GVA • Employment growth in the sector (direct and indirect) • Reduction of institutional deficit or indebtedness • Annual growth in own revenue (e.g. +10%)
Professionalization, valorization and retention of human resources	There is a strong expectation of improvements in salary conditions, the establishment of dedicated career pathways, reduced staff turnover, higher levels of technical qualification and greater attractiveness of the sector for young people and specialised professionals.	Human resources indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turnover rate (annual decrease, e.g. -5%) • Real increase in average wages (e.g., +7%) • % of professionals with certified training (>80% in some responses) • Nº. of hours of continuous training per employee • Team satisfaction index • Number of young people integrated in the sector
Organizational modernization and digitalization	The strategy should also translate into greater administrative efficiency, bureaucratic simplification, the adoption of digital systems for management and reporting, the strategic use of data and the systematic measurement of impact.	Innovation and digitalisation indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of entities with digital management systems (>70% in some proposals) • Nº. of social innovation projects implemented • Proportion of entities with defined and published impact indicators • Nº. of pilot projects implemented or replicated • Annual investment in technological modernization • Digital Maturity Index
Social and environmental innovation	It should further promote innovative projects, replicable models, the integration of digital and ecological transitions, and the development of evidence-based solutions.		

Main expected Results		Examples of Indicators	
Increased social impact and territorial coverage	Territorial expansion is expected, alongside the reduction of waiting lists, greater proximity to communities and more integrated and specialised responses, particularly in areas such as ageing, mental health, poverty, childhood, inclusion and housing.	Territorial and structural indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial coverage of responses (% of municipalities/parishes) • N°. of entities created or strengthened per region • Number of new social responses opened • Employment growth in rural areas • Reduction of regional inequalities
Reduction of inequalities and improvement in quality of life	The strategy is seen as an instrument of social transformation: reduction of poverty, decrease in isolation, improvement of well-being, increased employability of vulnerable groups and strengthening of territorial cohesion.	Social impact indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N°. of beneficiaries supported • Reducing the rate of poverty and exclusion • Job reintegration rate (+10% suggested) • Reduction of waiting lists in critical areas • Average response time to requests • Reduction of visits to hospital emergency rooms • % improvement in physical, emotional and social well-being • Reduction of social isolation • Employability rate of vulnerable groups • N°. of vacancies created in social responses (daycare, long-term care, etc.) • Reduction of recidivism in situations of violence or addiction
Strengthening intersectoral cooperation and coordination	Greater networking among social organisations, the State, the private sector and academia, with active participation in the definition of public policies and reduced duplication of responses.	Cooperation and governance indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N°. of active networks and consortia • N°. of public-private-social partnerships • Frequency of concertation mechanisms • Participation in public consultations • N°. of public policies influenced by the sector • N°. of organizations with published strategic plans and impact reports

Main expected Results		Examples of Indicators	
Institutional recognition and public appreciation of the sector	The sector expects greater integration in public policies, political recognition, media visibility and a change in perception — from assistentialism to a strategic partner in development.	Recognition and communication indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of public perception of the role of the Social Economy (measured by national surveys). • % of Portuguese who are (or recognize that they are) members or users of Social Economy entities. • Positive media coverage • N°. of active volunteers • N°. of individual and corporate donations • Participation in campaigns and public events • Publication of specific legislation for social enterprises and associated regulations. • N°. of entities recognised as social enterprises

11. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the public consultation reveals a convergent vision: the sector seeks a National Strategy centred on the need for financing and financial sustainability, the valuing of people and the professionalisation of management, together with technological modernisation, regulatory simplification and multi-actor coordination. The priority is not merely to expand responses, but to create systemic conditions to consolidate, qualify, innovate and demonstrate impact, strengthening the Social Economy as a structural pillar of development and of social and territorial cohesion in Portugal.

Additionally, and in overall terms, the results of this consultation also show strong coherence with the stakeholder consultations carried out between 8 and 10 October 2025 by the OECD with the support of CASES and DGSS. The two exercises converge on the fundamental strategic pillars, notably:

- Strengthening multi-stakeholder coordination and governance
- Increased visibility and institutional recognition
- Professionalization and valorization of human resources
- Technical, human and digital training
- Financial sustainability and appropriate financing models
- Favorable regulatory environment

The differences observed are mainly of emphasis and depth, rather than of strategic orientation. Nevertheless, some differences can still be identified and should be taken into consideration:

- **Weight of the territorial dimension:** this report highlights more clearly territorial inequalities and the need for differentiated support for low-density territories. Although the previous conclusions of OECD recognised the role of the sector in territorial cohesion, territorialisation does not appear with the same degree of strategic centrality;
- **Digitalisation:** It emerges as a structural challenge and as a concrete measure for organisational modernisation. The conclusions of the consultation led by the OECD also address digital literacy and the use of platforms, but frame the issue mainly from the perspective of administrative efficiency and the centralisation of information, rather than as an internal transformative axis for organisations;
- **Sectoral potential and future challenges:** the results of this consultation highlight concerns about the increasing complexity of social needs and develop in greater detail the areas of current impact and potential future impact (housing, mental health, ageing, social innovation, ecological transition).

Nevertheless, the convergences between the different consultation moments reinforce the robustness of the conclusions drawn in the national public consultation process, suggesting that the priorities identified reflect structural concerns widely shared among different actors.

In this regard, the results systematised in this report will constitute a structuring contribution to the definition of the fundamental elements of a National Strategy for the Social Economy. The priorities, challenges, needs and proposals identified will be considered in the strategic formulation process, namely in the definition of intervention axes, targets and monitoring mechanisms. At the same time, the contributions collected will serve as informative elements and empirical support for the final report of the Strategy, to be prepared by the OECD, ensuring that the strategic options adopted reflect the concerns and expectations expressed by the different actors involved and are based on a consolidated and participatory reading of the sector's reality.

RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION WITH THE SOCIAL ECONOMY SECTOR

This infographic presents the main results of the public consultation promoted by **CASES – Cooperative António Sérgio for the Social Economy**, with the aim of collecting contributions from the entire Social Economy ecosystem on the main **challenges, needs and priorities** for this sector, to inform the development of a **National Strategy for the Social Economy**¹ based on 4 pillars:

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

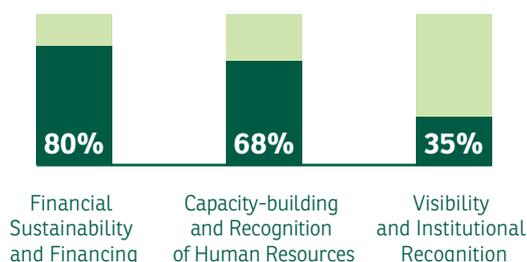
COORDINATION MECHANISM

NATIONAL COMMUNICATION PLAN

MONITORING MECHANISM

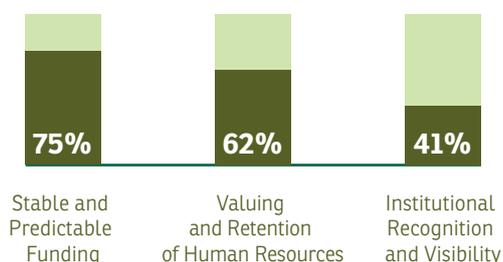
KEY FINDINGS

TOP 3 CHALLENGES



■ % of total valid responses (n=221)

TOP 3 NEEDS



■ % of total valid responses (n=208)

THE 3 PRIORITY AXES FOR A NATIONAL STRATEGY



Complementary dimensions: social innovation, regional and local promotion and digital modernisation

KEY EXPECTED OUTCOMES



¹ Consultation carried out within the scope of the international project "Supporting the development of the Social Economy as a driver of growth" developed by the European Commission, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), CASES and the Directorate-General for Social Security (DGSS).

PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

Consultation Held between **October 6 and November 31, 2025**



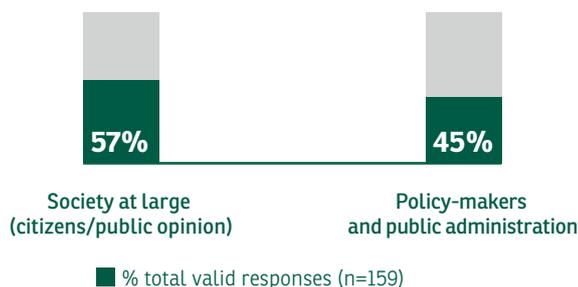
Consultation with strong thematic coherence, despite the over-representation of IPSS

FUNDAMENTAL AXES OF A COORDINATION MODEL



KEY ELEMENTS OF A COMMUNICATION PLAN

MAIN TARGET AUDIENCE



KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Reinforce knowledge and notoriety of the sector
- Promoting internal cohesion
- Influencing public policies
- Mobilize financial and human resources
- Mobilize engagement and participation

ESSENTIAL MONITORING INDICATORS

-  **Economic and financial**
-  **Human Resources**
-  **Innovation and digitalization**
-  **Territorial and structural**
-  **Social impact**
-  **Cooperation and governance**
-  **Recognition and communication**