Social Innovation ⊕ Initiative

European Competence Centre for Social Innovation

Work Programme for the National Competence Centres for Social Innovations Working Group in 2024

Annex 2

This document presents a draft working programme proposal for the year 2024. The structure of the plan is designed on the basis of the theory of change elaborated by the community of practice (CoP) in 2023 and sets out 4 steps to support the development of the National Competence Centres (NCC) for Social Innovation (SI) in all EU member states (MS). It is also designed to be fully integrated with the ESF+ Social Innovation Community of Practice (SI CoP) Work Programme (WP) for 2024.

Taking into account that there will be significant changes in the composition of the teams powering this working group during 2024, this proposal suggests the iteration of the suggested steps during the whole year. Complementarily, all the activities of the work plan will begin with a summary of the process developed so that anyone joining during 2024 has the necessary information to be integrated into the collaborative learning process adequately. Finally, the proposal to work in teams with (MS with similar capacities and needs) will allow for personalized support for each country.

Step 1. Self-assessment.
January-March 2024.

The first step is to self-assess what capacities and tools exist in each member state. For this purpose, a self-assessment guide to be filled in by each NCC will be shared. The guide is built on the logic and basic elements of the theory of change. Once the strengths and needs have been identified, each member state will be offered a learning path and a support system to develop the competences and capacities they need.

As this is a process of collective experimentation, the support system will be channeled through a learning community that will bring together member states with similar strengths and weaknesses. This allows to gather a variety of practices and to develop different models under a common framework, providing each MS with the possibility to adapt support systems to its own context.

Step 2. Ecosystem mapping.
April-July 2024.

Once the learning community is in place, those centres that have a more advanced SI ecosystem mapping process will share their experience with the rest of the NCC. Ideally, work would be implemented in 3 or 4 groups. In parallel, the working group will explore the possibility of offering a digital tool to visualize this mapping in real time, in each member state and across the EU.

As previously discussed, this working programme will build on the challenges identified in the mapping process concluded in 2023 in the framework of the competence centres' six transnational partnerships (Consortia). A clear definition of the strategic goal and process of this exercise will be suggested. Examples will be provided of where ecosystem mapping has helped social innovation organisations previously address complex social challenges. More specifically, the mapping will be oriented towards agents, initiatives (including their co-creation, scaling up or evaluation needs and capabilities) that are focused on addressing complex challenges prioritized by the European Semester, notably under their ESF+ social innovation framework.

Step 3. Co-creation and prototyping.
August-October 2024.

After having built the basic capacities to map the social innovation ecosystem in each member state, the working group will focus on systematizing co-creation processes to address complex challenges. As outlined in Step 2, those centers that are more advanced in their co-creation proposal will share it with the rest of the NCC. In parallel, the working group explores the possibility of offering a digital tool to visualize this mapping in real time, in each member state and across the EU.

Step 4. Scaling.
November-January 2025.

The last step of this work programme will focus on visualizing the experimentation portfolio in each MS and selecting those practices (and the processes) that can be scaled up at local, state or regional level.

Cross-cutting elements

Complementary to this process, it is proposed to hold online training seminars on the transversal elements of the process: (1) governance and evaluation, (2) communication and (3) financing of the NCC. The specific dates and the suggested content for these seminars will be coordinated with the SI CoP working program to avoid duplication and benefit from the collaboration and mutual support between all SI key stakeholders, ESF+ bodies in particular.

For instance, the planned 2024 SI CoP events related to SI call preparation and selection criteria, to social impact evaluation and evidence, to scaling-up and transfer as well as the last one dedicated to collaboration models between key stakeholders of the ESF+ SI ecosystem will require a strong collaboration between NCC and ESF+ Bodies, including for instance some preparatory work in the NCC WG to better assess NCC positions and challenges to be discussed and analysed during the SI CoP events.

Additionally, this WG will explore how to link NCC functions and activities with the ESF+ programmes and their policy priorities in specific policy areas and with the other CoPs fields.

This collaboration between the NCC WG and the SI CoP implies regular mutual information. Each NCC event will start by a short information point about the SI CoP activities and plans, and vice-versa. The NCC WG will collaborate very closely with the beneficiaries of the 'National Competence Centers for Social Innovation: Building-up and Consolidating the Capacity" Call for proposals.

Calendar

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Assessment	■	■	■									
Mapping				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Co-creation									■	■	■	■
Scaling											■	■
Webinars												

List of planned events

- Seminar for NCC WG (13/03/2024) (on-line)
- NCC beneficiaries Kick-off (12-13/06/2024) (on-site) – in collaboration with Call
- NCC beneficiaries learning mutual (16-17/10/2024) (on-line) – in collaboration with Call
- NCC beneficiaries learning mutual (04-05/12/2024) (on-site) – in collaboration with Call