

Action Plan for the region of Catalonia

RaiSE
Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

ACCIÓ



Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia



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IFKA



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ZENTRUM FÜR SOCIALE INNOVATION
CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION
ZSI

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Project: RaiSE

Partner organisation(s) concerned: Catalan Agency for Business Competitiveness (ACCIÓ)

Country: Spain

NUTS2 region: Catalonia

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Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- European Territorial Cooperation programme
- Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument(s) addressed:

Government of Catalonia Support Plan for the Third Social Sector. II) Measures oriented to the provision of training and advisory services. Objectives: a) to promote the internationalisation of the Third Social Sector, and b) to promote the professionalization of the sector and quality improvement.

Further details on the policy context and the way the action plan should contribute to improve the policy instrument:

The policy instrument that will be improved in Catalonia with the learnings from the exchange of experience is the Government of Catalonia Support Plan for the Third Social Sector (2016-2018), coordinated by the Ministry of Presidency of the Government of Catalonia. This Support Plan is a transversal collaboration agreement between the Government of Catalonia and the Catalan Third Social Sector entities to face all emerging social economy challenges. It includes today 6 areas of action defined in 32 measures to contribute, improve, build up and strengthen social entities. However, in the current policy instrument some training and business advisory services are missed, considering the specific barriers and constraints to the development of social enterprises, which have been properly identified in the RaiSE Study on the social enterprises ecosystem in Catalonia. The action plan will contribute to an improvement of the policy environment in Catalonia to support the competitiveness of social enterprises. The current Support Plan for the Third Social Sector (2016-2018) is under evaluation during 2019 and RaiSE learnings will significantly influence several measures of the new and fourth Support Plan (2020-2022). Each Support Plan for the Third Social Sector lasts for three years and the Third one finished in 2018, that's why RaiSE learnings will influence the Fourth Support Plan for the Third Social Sector (2020-2022), a policy instrument that did not exist when RaiSE proposal was written.

Thanks to the RaiSE project, the stakeholders involved in the Support Plan for the Third Social Sector (especially, on the part of the Government of Catalonia, the Directorate-General for the Social Economy, Third Sector, Cooperatives and Self-employment, and ACCIÓ, and also the Catalan Third Social Sector Platform) will carry out new initiatives and new services (or reformulate existing programmes) to enhance social enterprises competitiveness in Catalonia, inspired in the learnings from the other partnering regions, and the project will contribute to a better governance as well:

Action 1 consists on a new service for Catalan social enterprises to offer them personalised counselling services and an analysis of their capabilities to access international tenders & multilateral funds (including the European Union funding), inspired by the learnings of the workshop "public procurement and social enterprises" celebrated in the interregional meeting in Bologna.

Action 2 will be a new service (training sessions and information materials) for Catalan social enterprises interested in receiving financial support, inspired by the Irish good practice for RaiSE “Clann Credo”).

Action 3 consists on the improvement of an existing service, that will boost the internationalisation of Catalan social enterprises with a global focus, inspired by the Scottish support system for social enterprises.

Action 4 establishes a working group on social enterprises competitiveness in order to have an improved governance between the regional authorities and key stakeholders that deal with social economy.

Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1: Enhance among social enterprises the new ACCIÓ’s free service “CPI Capacitació”, which offers enterprises personalised counselling services and an analysis of their capabilities to access international tenders & multilateral funds (including the European Union funding).

1. Relevance to the project

The RaiSE Study on the social enterprises ecosystem in Catalonia proved that Catalan social enterprises have difficulties to access public procurement, particularly international public procurement. This is a problem that is shared among all the partnering regions, and that’s why a specific interregional workshop entitled “Public procurement and social enterprises” was organised during the interregional meeting in Bologna (November 2017). During this workshop, Emilia-Romagna, Scotland and Catalonia presented the state of play of public procurement in their regions in relation to social enterprises and all partners debated about possible solutions. Emilia-Romagna presented their Guide for public procurement, which main purpose is to provide local authorities and their relevant institutions, companies and economic operators a set of clear operating instructions on the procedures for the assignment and delivery of services in the relation between public authorities and social cooperatives. Moreover, the related topic of Co-design was emphasised, an operational tool with the aims of supporting public authorities and local stakeholders in taking innovative forms of relation in the creation or re-definition of services, by adopting administrative procedures that can facilitate/support such relational and operational processes. However, it was highlighted that the access of social enterprises to international public procurement was not facilitated at all.

ACCIÓ, as the Catalan Agency for Business Competitiveness, supports Catalan enterprises in their internationalisation process, and this includes the support in accessing international public procurement. By the time of the interregional meeting in Bologna, ACCIÓ’s international public procurement unit had started to develop a new service entitled “CPI Capacitació” (in English,

International Public Procurement Capacity Development), which would offer enterprises personalised counselling services, an analysis of their capabilities and advice and recommendations to access international tenders and multilateral funds (including the European Union funding), for free: enterprises would pay nothing for this service, which will be carried out by ACCIÓ's expert consultants on public procurement in Barcelona, Brussels and Washington. After Bologna meeting, and particularly after the specific workshop on "public procurement and social enterprises", RaiSE project management unit in ACCIÓ talked to ACCIÓ's international public procurement unit to include social enterprises as well in this new ACCIÓ's free service.

2. Nature of the action

The participating social enterprises will receive the support of ACCIÓ's expert consultants on international public procurement. Their capabilities to access international tenders will be analysed and they will receive assistance to define or revise their strategy in the field of international public procurement. This service will last for two months (60 working hours).

The support received be detailed in a personalised report that will include:

- Definition/Revision of the international public procurement strategy.
- Definition/Revision of the strategy for selecting business opportunities.
- Selection of the most appropriate bodies and/or type of procurement.
- Selection of the product or service which fits best with the opportunities.
- Recommendations and next steps.

The report's conclusions will also be presented to the enterprise during a final meeting.

Besides, the participating social enterprises will be invited to participate in training sessions about access to multilateral funds and international tenders.

Indicator: number of "CPI Capacitació" projects for social enterprises.

3. Stakeholders involved

- ACCIÓ: the expert consultants on public procurement that ACCIÓ has in Barcelona and in the multilateral Trade & Investment offices (Brussels and Washington) will implement this action.

4. Timeframe

Ongoing – this action already started on May 2018.

There is no end date.

For each individual project the service will last for two months and the timeframe will be:

- Definition/Revision of the international public procurement strategy. Month 1.
- Definition/Revision of the strategy for selecting business opportunities. Month 1.
- Selection of the most appropriate bodies and/or type of procurement. Month 2.
- Selection of the product or service which fits best with the opportunities. Month 2.
- Recommendations and next steps. Month 2.

5. Indicative costs

4.200 € per project. There is not a maximum number of projects per year.

6. Indicative funding sources

100% funded by ACCIÓ's own funding sources.

ACTION 2: Organise training sessions and provide information materials about financing in the “Ateneus Cooperatius” network, in order to identify and advise social enterprises interested in receiving financial support.

1. Relevance to the project

The Irish good practice for RaiSE “Clann Credo”, which is Ireland's leading provider of loans to community organisations providing a social return and capacity to sustain a loan, is the inspiration for this action. The good practice was presented in the first workshop on good practices celebrated during the interregional meeting in Sweden (April 2018) and arose great interest among Catalan stakeholders, who could also see, during the study visits in the interregional meeting in Westport (January 2019), great examples of success social enterprises that were born or could grow thanks to Clann Credo loans.

Many social enterprises ask for a Clann Credo loan in Ireland, while in Catalonia, who already has public and private loans for social enterprises similar to Clann Credo's, 43.7% of social enterprises never used a loan, while at the same time 39% of them state that more funding sources should be available for social enterprises, as RaiSE Study on the social enterprises ecosystem in Catalonia shows and which proves that there is a barrier and a need in that sense. So the sources are there, but more dissemination actions should be undertaken in order to make the available funding options accessible to social enterprises. Clann Credo is very good at organising training sessions and dissemination events all over Ireland, as well as at communicating what they do, and this has definitely inspired Catalan stakeholders to improve the communication and dissemination regarding financial solutions for social enterprises.

2. Nature of the action

The structure of the Catalan good practice “Ateneus Cooperatius” network is very similar to the Clann Credo's principle: “Ateneus Cooperatius” are proximity cooperative centres that develop projects and activities to boost the social and cooperative economy in a specific territorial demarcation. The aim of “Ateneus Cooperatius” is to become reference spaces and meeting points, where social entrepreneurs that belong to the same area can learn, work together and innovate,

and access from a single entry point to all the available information about the social and cooperative economy in Catalonia. “Ateneus Cooperatius” is born as a “network of networks”, that brings together 131 stakeholders of the social and cooperative economy through 14 different centres all over Catalonia (Clann Credo also has several delegations all over Ireland). Interested stakeholders have formed a network in a territorial demarcation (the “Ateneu Cooperatiu”), with the technical and economic assistance of the Directorate-General for the Social Economy of the Government of Catalonia.

Besides, the “Ateneus Cooperatius” already have a specific budget dedicated to dissemination actions. So, following Clann Credo’s inspirations explained in part 1, more seminars and workshops will be organised all over Catalonia regarding financial solutions for social enterprises. Besides, ICF (Catalonia’s public financial institution) will produce a special leaflet informing about the loans for social enterprises. The rationale behind these workshops will be the following: workshops opened to the general public (all the social enterprises and entrepreneurs interested can attend) and they will be organised all over Catalonia, profiting the “Ateneus Cooperatius” network, in order to bring the financial solutions to the territory.

Indicator: number of sessions about financial solutions for social enterprises organised in the “Ateneus Cooperatius” network.

3. Stakeholders involved

- Directorate-General for the Social Economy, Third Sector, Cooperatives and Self-employment: it is the institution in charge of the “Ateneus Cooperatius” network, where the informative sessions will be organised.
- ICF (Catalonia’s public financial institution): in collaboration with the Directorate-General, the ICF will elaborate the information materials.

4. Timeframe

2020 - 2022 (estimate date, it will depend on the final starting date of the Fourth Government of Catalonia Support Plan for the Third Social Sector (2020-2022)).

5. Indicative costs

To be confirmed

6. Indicative funding sources

“Ateneus Cooperatius” own funding sources.

ACTION 3: Boost the internationalisation of social enterprises with a global focus, systematizing the individual international promotion projects, the prospective international missions (one per year), and the training sessions about competitiveness and internationalisation.

1. Relevance to the project

ACCIÓ has 30 years of experience in helping Catalan SMEs in their internationalisation processes. The tool that ACCIÓ uses for that purpose are the 40 ACCIÓ's Trade & Investment worldwide offices, which help Catalan enterprises to do business in 110 countries. Thanks to RaiSE Study on the social enterprises ecosystem in Catalonia, we could realise that just 2.5% of social enterprises are internationalised. However, the Study also provided promising data: 22.5% of the Catalan social enterprises has begun collaborating abroad (outside Spain). ACCIÓ should, therefore, devote more efforts to boost the internationalisation of social enterprises.

RaiSE interregional meeting in Edinburgh provided the inspiration for this Action, as we could realise, in the interregional thematic workshop "Internationalising Social Enterprises", that the Scottish government has put many efforts in coordinating its social enterprise stakeholders and establish collaboration agreements with them: for instance, Community Enterprise in Scotland is in charge of the International Social Enterprise observatory, or Scottish Enterprise officially delegates in Scottish Development International the international trade activities. Scotland understands that, for a better coordination between stakeholders, it is important to officially sign an agreement. In Catalonia, ACCIÓ and the Directorate-General for the Social Economy, Third Sector, Cooperatives and Self-employment collaborated in the past to carry out the service "Aracoop International" (a programme based on advisory services and capacity-building activities for social enterprises), but a collaboration agreement was never signed. After learning the Scottish experience, and that written words are always more effective than oral agreements, a new collaboration agreement will be proposed between ACCIÓ and the Ministry of Labour of the Government of Catalonia, systematizing the actions that were already being undertaken together (the individual international promotion projects) and enriching them with more content: collective sessions to present results and awareness and training sessions, which will be inspired in the growth workshops that Scottish Enterprise organises and that were explained during the workshop on Action Plans celebrated during the interregional meeting in Ireland (January 2019).

2. Nature of the action

Four specific activities will be implemented under this action.

The first three activities are included in a collaboration agreement between the Ministry of Labour of the Government of Catalonia (Directorate-General for the Social Economy, Third Sector, Cooperatives and Self-employment) and ACCIÓ which will be signed in 2019.

The fourth activity will be implemented in collaboration with the Catalan Third Social Sector Platform.

The four activities are the following:

- 1. Individual International Promotion projects:** 20 individual free consultancy services per year for social economy enterprises based in Catalonia, through the 40 ACCIÓ's Trade & Investment worldwide offices, which help Catalan enterprises to do business in 110 countries. The internationalisation project is materialised in an Action Plan, that lasts 4 months (120 working hours) and that may include one or more of the following services: identification and selection of the most appropriate commercialisation channels, elaboration of market studies, research of distributors and partners in the new market, detection of final customers, access to international public procurement, staff selection in the chosen market, and enterprise implementation abroad. The service is for enterprises of the social economy based in Catalonia: cooperatives, foundations and associations with economic activity, labour societies, mutual societies, insertion companies, special employment centres and agricultural transformation societies. It is necessary that the applicant company has its product or service consolidated in the market and in a position to start an internationalisation project. Every enterprise can only benefit from one free project per year.

Indicator: number of Individual International Promotion projects. Target: 20.

- 2. Collective sessions to present results:** once the annual call is finished, ACCIÓ, in cooperation with the Directorate-General for the Social Economy, Third Sector, Cooperatives and Self-employment, will organise one or several open collective sessions to present results, the speakers of which will be the social economy enterprises that have benefited from the service.

Indicator: number of attendees to the collective sessions to present results.

- 3. Awareness and training sessions:** ACCIÓ will participate in informative sessions about the internationalisation of the social economy enterprises. The organisation of these sessions (location, call, etc.) will be in the frame of the "Ateneus Cooperatius" network and in cooperation with ACCIÓ's delegations all over Catalonia.

Indicator: number of informative sessions organised & number of attendees.

- 4. Prospective International missions for the third social sector:** ACCIÓ will organise every year a mission for well-established third social sector entities and social economy enterprises, with the potential to internationalise their services or social inclusion models.

Indicator: number of third social sector entities and social economy enterprises participating in the prospective mission.

3. Stakeholders involved

- ACCIÓ will implement all the activities.
- Directorate-General for the Social Economy, Third Sector, Cooperatives and Self-employment: will collaborate in the dissemination of activities 1, 2 and 3.
- Catalan Third Social Sector Platform: it will collaborate in the dissemination of activity 4.

4. Timeframe

- Activities 1, 2 and 3 will start once the collaboration agreement between the Ministry of Labour of the Government of Catalonia (Directorate-General for the Social Economy, Third Sector, Cooperatives and Self-employment) and ACCIÓ is signed (*estimated: Spring 2019*) and will be implemented until Winter 2020. It is expected that this agreement will be renewed for 2020-2021.
- Activity 4 will be carried out on an annual basis. 2019's mission will take place in November 2019 in Brussels and the participants will learn about EU programmes to help social enterprises access to finance. 2020's mission will take place in Washington DC and the participants will learn about opportunities for social enterprises in multilateral institutions and the social enterprises ecosystem in the United States. 2021's mission is not decided yet.

5. Indicative costs

- Activity 1 will have a maximum cost of 192.000 € per year (9.600 € per project, maximum 20 projects per year).
- Activities 2 & 3 do not involve relevant costs (just transportation costs for the speakers, as the locations belong to the Government of Catalonia).
- Activity 4 has an estimated cost of 12.000 € per mission (with 8 participants).

6. Indicative funding sources

- Activity 1 is 25% funded by the Directorate-General for the Social Economy, Third Sector, Cooperatives and Self-employment's own funding sources and 75% by ACCIÓ's own funding sources.
- Activity 4 is 100% funded by ACCIÓ's own funding sources.

ACTION 4: Stablish a working group about “social enterprises competitiveness”, led by ACCIÓ, which gives continuity to the RaiSE Catalan stakeholders group.

1. Relevance to the project

Until the RaiSE project was born, it did not exist in Catalonia a working group about “social enterprises competitiveness”, that gathered together all the relevant Catalan stakeholders related to that field. Thanks to the RaiSE project, stakeholders that have sat together for the first time in the stakeholder group meetings, or travelled together during the interregional RaiSE meetings, realised that they had many things in common and that they could potentially collaborate. Moreover, Catalan stakeholders have requested that the RaiSE Catalan stakeholders group does not disappear when the RaiSE project is over, but that the group remains and goes on working together beyond RaiSE.

The Swedish good practice “Partnership for Social Innovation” has definitely inspired this Action. Catalan stakeholders were impressed to discover that Region Örebro County could coordinate a very motivated partnership of 35 organisations, that jointly discuss societal challenges and new ideas for collaboration across organisations. The collaboration greatly expands the knowledge, experience and expertise bases of each participating organisation. The small working Swedish group meets every three weeks, and the big meetings take place every three months. It will be difficult for Catalan stakeholders to meet that often, but they have committed to meet once every six months at least.

2. Nature of the action

The working group about “social enterprises competitiveness” will meet once every six months at least. As in the Partnership for Social Innovation, the core of every meeting will be: “what are we doing and what can we do to make social enterprises more competitive in the global market”? With that focus on mind, practical specific workshops or training sessions will be organised about the topics that are more relevant to stakeholders. The aim is to turn this working group to a natural forum for both discussion and action for social economy organisations, social enterprises, public bodies and policy makers.

Indicator: number of meetings organised. Target: 2 per year.

3. Stakeholders involved

- ACCIÓ will lead this working group, organising the discussion topics.
- Catalan stakeholders (Directorate-General for Interdepartmental Coordination, Directorate-General for the Social Economy, Third Sector, Cooperatives and Self-employment, Catalan Third Sector Platform, Catalan Third Social Sector Confederation, ICF-Catalonia’s public financial institution, Social Business City Barcelona) and representative Catalan social enterprises will take an active participation in the meetings.

4. Timeframe

Starting date: September 2019.

There is no end date.

5. Indicative costs

This activity does not involve relevant costs. The premises where the meetings will take place will be ACCIÓ's own premises. Photocopies, coffees, etc., will be charged in ACCIÓ's own budget.

6. Indicative funding sources

100% funded by ACCIÓ's own funding sources.