

## Social Enterprise Policy 2023/2024

To whom it may concern,

I provide this submission to the National Social Enterprise Policy 2024-2027 on behalf of the social enterprises in the Ballyfermot Chapelized Partnership catchment area. Below are recommendations for adoption into the policy based on the first hand experiences of social enterprise employees and managers, BCP's role as enterprise and social enterprise support and other stakeholders.

### We recommend that:

#### Awareness

- Social enterprises under the umbrella of Local Development Companies are specifically recognised under the definition provided by DRCD and by all local and city councils and local enterprise offices. BCP have struggled with grant awarding bodies and council bodies who do not recognise SEs under the LDCs.
- Financing applications from communities where education levels are low and disadvantage is high should be indexed and weighted as such so applications are not scored without acknowledgement of obstacles.
- A nationally recognised and attainable branding mark be established. To follow this, a national marketing campaign should be established which involves the whole sector.

#### Growing Social Enterprise

- LDCs are supported financially beyond SICAP and Leader to make a more telling contribution to SEs. LDCs are the most hands on support body for SEs but are forced to stretch limited budgets across a high number of organisations and limited in the grant funding we can administer.
- The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection should be asked to support social enterprise through schemes like Back to Work Enterprise Allowance, Short Term Enterprise Allowance and Self-Employed Means Payment.
- The CSP application process is reviewed in full. Future processes should provide for more in depth applications and a facility for providing clarifications and appeals. Information sessions should correlate more specifically with the expectations of applicants.
- The shared employee model pioneered in Donegal should be expanded for a wider trial.
- Feasibility study funding is created for SEs to test new ideas.

#### **Data Collection and Social Impact Measurement**

- Policy bank tools like [sepolicybank.ie](http://sepolicybank.ie) should be expanded and brought under the realm of a national support body such as SERI.
- A database be created that lists and certifies all social enterprises. SERI's baseline data collection should be considered as the work has already been carried out. Pairing this with the CRO or Charities Registry would suit to avoid duplication.

#### **National and International Engagement**

- Engagement with third level institutes through programmes like ENFUSE or UL Engage should be widened and become part of a CSR mandate for universities.
- Pathway provisions be made for exiting labour market activation employees to find new supported employment as many Tús participants are returning to unemployment rather than finding new gainful work.
- The new policy ensures robust communication with the insurance industry and seek to address the high costs that has contributed to the closure of many SEs.

#### **Climate Action Contribution**

- Policy Objective three is strengthened considerably. Disadvantaged communities are not equitably provided for by most climate action measures. Greater focus should be paid to community garden and other green initiatives as there are numerous opportunities including home allotment installation and, community workshops.
- An ideas bank be developed for those in social enterprise to post new ideas that have the potential for viability or could be implemented elsewhere. BCP would love to consider a soil production project/social enterprise from a combination of biodigested food scraps from Wheatfield Prison and An Post, horse manure from the Cherry Orchard Equine Centre (20+ tonnes) and cotton collected by the likes of Fibreshed. Similarly, BCP would love to create a prototype where gases from soils, compost and manures are captured and reused to heat grey waters etc.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Ballyfermot Chapelized Partnership CLG



Rialtas na hÉireann  
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