



SEA4NEB

Background paper on Social Economy Cluster Development
and the New European Bauhaus: A Pathway to Resilient
Communities

Diesis Network



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Social Economy Actors for New European Bauhaus



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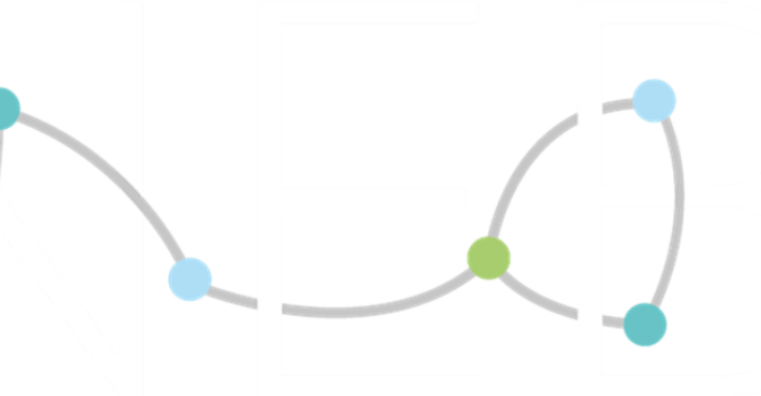
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The aim of this background paper is to develop a basis for the comparison of cases, to present and assess their main characteristics; and to set the framework for discussions about their utility and transferability (by raising key points and issues for discussion).

Thematic axis:¹ prioritising the places and people that need it most

¹ The NEB focuses on four thematic axes of change: i) Reconnecting with nature; ii) Regaining a sense of belonging; iii) Prioritising the places and people that need it the most; and iv) Shaping a circular industrial ecosystem and supporting life cycle thinking. For more details about it please consult this document https://prizes.new-european-bauhaus.eu/themes/custom/custom_ulkit/pdf/applicants-guide/NEB%20Prizes%202023_EN.pdf

CONTENTS



05

INTRODUCTION
CONTEXTUALISING THE
DIFFERENT CASES OF GOOD
PRACTICE

10

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS OF
THE CASES

19

ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO
THE NEB COMPASS VALUES
AND WORKING PRINCIPLES

25

SPECIFICATION OF ISSUES FOR
LEARNING AND DISCUSSION

27

PROJECT PARTNERS

INTRODUCTION CONTEXTUALISING THE DIFFERENT CASES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Exploring the cluster model in the social economy ecosystem: A New European Bauhaus perspective

The New European Bauhaus is an innovative initiative that infuses design, sustainability, accessibility, affordability and investment to fulfil the European Green Deal. It breathes life into the Green Deal by making it appealing, human-centred and accessible. This movement, grounded in sustainability, accessibility and aesthetics, brings the Green Deal closer to people, making concepts like recycling, renewable energies and biodiversity natural and integrated into our daily lives.

A new approach has emerged that combines the power of clusters with the forward-thinking principles of the New European Bauhaus to drive innovation and progress in a regenerative way. Acting as centres of innovation, clusters support collaboration and partnership among specialised businesses and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as other key players like incubators, chambers of commerce, municipalities and more. Cluster missions bring together diverse groups of stakeholders, including local and regional authorities, research institutions, universities, social economy organisations, SMEs and civil society groups.

As emphasised in the Social Economy Action Plan,² business models based on the social economy bring a lot of value to local economies and societies. They help to promote inclusiveness, resilience and sustainability. These models are deeply rooted in the local community and are primarily focused on serving the people where they are based. This, in turn, helps to retain population, economic activities and revenues locally, thereby driving local economic development in sectors that are relevant to the region, and to support short value chains by facilitating local production and consumption which promotes climate action and the circular economy. Additionally, they contribute to providing social services that are often limited in remote areas.

The 'social economy cluster' model is a valuable strategy for social economy entities seeking new development perspectives. It is characterised by a consistent set of shared interests, values and principles, with members cooperating in various ways. This model strives for a quadruple-helix model, unique in its synergy between social economy and mainstream enterprises, research and education, public authorities, and civil society. Social economy clusters function through a jointly managed legal entity or an informal structure, led by a

² <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1537&langId=en>

cluster organisation, and set up supportive projects and services for their members. Fields of activity are diverse and cross-sectoral.

To support Member States and stakeholders in enhancing the social economy and social innovation, the Commission has decided to include Clusters of Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEI) in European industrial cluster policy.³

Social economy clusters link a unique membership composition to social and ecological innovation objectives. The recent report, "Clusters of Social and Ecological Innovation in the European Union, Perspectives and Experiences",⁴ published in December 2021 by the expert group on social economy and social enterprises (GECES), has defined a new approach to partnership and local green deals. As defined by the GECES working group⁵ "Clusters of Social and Ecological Innovation (CSEI) groups are mainly social economy entities with mainstream enterprises, civil society organisations, public authorities, and education and research institutions that cooperate in a particular location to improve local economic, ecological and societal prosperity and regeneration by facilitating cooperation, pooling of resources and enhancing innovation capacity."⁶

CSEIs consist of social economy entities, local authorities, and education and research institutions that work together in a jointly managed structure or project. They collaborate in a specific geographical area to improve local economic, social and environmental prosperity. Their areas of activity are diverse and range from circular economy to employment and job inclusion, sustainable agriculture, or incubation and social entrepreneurial support.

The Pôles Territoriaux de Coopération Économique (PTCEs)⁷ are an interesting example of a clustering approach in France. They comprise groups of professional producers and distributors, which are primarily very small and have a cooperative vocation. These organisations first aggregate around a central field of cultural or artistic activity, even if there is often an additional competence regarding territorial development. These organisations have a variety of legal statuses, commercial and non-commercial, but what dominates is the associative form. Different organisations in each cluster share a common strategy, and resources are shared, allowing a reduction of individual costs.

PTCEs bring together various stakeholders from the social and solidarity economy (SSE) alongside public and private actors to cultivate inventive economic and social projects tailored to local demands. These clusters have experienced an increase in governmental

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/48376>

⁴ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/1ceb9a1d-6146-11ec-9c6c-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

⁵ The Expert Group on Social Economy and Social Enterprises (GECES) created a sub-group on "The role of clusters and similar forms of business cooperation in fostering the development of social economy" with the task of researching and exploring insights into social economy clusters and their role in fostering innovation in the European Union.

⁶ The CSEI definition was adapted from the cluster definition used in the EU Cluster Portal. For more detail see <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/48376>

⁷ <https://www.lelabo-ess.org/poles-territoriaux-de-cooperation-economique-ptce-0>

support since 2021 through a national recovery strategy, and operate within a legitimate legislative framework established by the SSE Act of 31 July 2014. According to Article 9 of this law, PTCEs constitute formations that unite SSE enterprises within the same geographical area. They partner with other companies, local authorities, research institutions, higher education establishments, training organisations, and other individuals or entities. The objectives of the PTCEs are to implement a continuous strategy of collaboration, pooling, and partnership in the pursuit of socially or technologically innovative economic and social projects that bolster sustainable local development. PTCEs encourage collaboration between public and private SSE participants anchored in robust territorial roots, enabling them to expand their range of activities and maximise their social, economic and environmental impact on the local area. They champion local development policies by promoting a resilient, non-relocatable economy through the judicious and coordinated use of local resources.

PTCEs offer numerous socio-economic benefits for local communities, including the creation of sustainable businesses and jobs, the transformation of working methods among local stakeholders, breaking down silos between SSE and other economic participants, contributions to the development of PTCE-supporting structures, and enhancing the appeal of a region by introducing new services for residents and businesses. The entities that make up PTCEs encompass a wide range of stakeholders who can support these clusters. They include grassroots actors responding to local challenges, SSE participants, academic contributors, private entrepreneurs, business leaders, and public authorities, especially at the local level. Local authorities play a pivotal role in the success of PTCEs by participating in these clusters or supporting their cooperative approach. They can facilitate the emergence and growth of PTCEs by establishing local support systems, allocating funding, providing access to land, and integrating PTCEs into their various public policies, thus elevating them to become significant contributors in local socio-economic ecosystems.

Territorial capital has a significant impact on economic growth. The quality of institutions and cohesion are crucial elements in creating conditions that allow territorial capital to fully express its potential. Therefore, it is essential to direct national policies towards the specific needs of each territory and boost institutional quality.⁸ Social capital is closely related to the concept of territorial capital and local development. The level of social capital determines the degree of social cohesion, the nature of relations with institutions, and the horizontal links. It refers to the spontaneous sharing of a value system that establishes and determines the quality of civil society and the links between its members. This is reflected directly in the quality of institutions and the ethical tissue.⁹

CSEIs and PTCEs go beyond conventional clusters by linking diverse entities and transcending borders. The European Union aims to integrate the social economy into various

⁸ Brasili, C. (2014). Il capitale territoriale nelle regioni europee. Un modello di crescita. Paper presented at the 6th edition of the Workshop UniCredit

⁹ Costantini, Pastorelli (2018). Social Economy Enterprises and Creative Cultural Industries, Diesis Network

sectors in collaboration with traditional enterprises, making PTEs and CSEIs an ideal platform for this purpose. The integration of the social economy into these clusters unleashes the potential for fruitful collaboration and knowledge exchange among members, creating a ripple effect that extends far beyond the clusters themselves.

This progress underscores the need to further nurture the development of these types of partnerships. The objective is to gain comprehensive insights into the values and unconventional methods that these models offer, and how they can influence and redefine regenerative initiatives. By delving into this analysis, we aspire to illuminate the dynamic relationship between clusters, the social economy, and the transformative capabilities of the New European Bauhaus.

The case studies: regenerative projects based on the social economy cluster approach

When it comes to human communities, the principle of regeneration involves recognising and supporting various systems. It also highlights the importance of human labour within these systems and addresses long-standing environmental injustices. This includes issues such as insecure land tenure and unequal power dynamics in labour relationships, which have undermined community capacity for social reproduction and eroded overall community well-being (McGreevy et al., 2022).¹⁰

The two case studies are a significant step in supporting the New European Bauhaus (NEB)'s objective of prioritising the places and people that need it the most. This aspect focuses on addressing the challenges and barriers faced by marginalised communities and areas, to promote social and environmental sustainability across Europe.

Roccalvaldina is a historically and architecturally significant village on the Tyrrhenian slope, offering stunning views of the Gulf of Milazzo and the Aeolian Islands. Despite its rich heritage, the area faces a significant socio-economic fragmentation that correlates with its decline.

The case study of Roccalvaldina is related to multiple aspects of the New European Bauhaus initiative. It does not just focus on the "prioritising the places and people that need it the most" axis. It also aligns with the "sense of belonging" axis and the "circular economy" axis. The initiative aims to create sustainable, beautiful and inclusive projects that foster a sense of connection and identification among individuals, communities and places. Enhancing the architectural heritage of the town and developing public spaces that encourage social interaction and community engagement are components that promote this sense of belonging. Moreover, the project aligns with the "circular industrial ecosystem and supporting life cycle thinking" axis of the NEB. It focuses on new biomaterials and bioplastics from circular economies. This approach promotes sustainability by emphasising the use of recycled materials and extending the lifespan of products. The initiative has three goals:

¹⁰ McGreevy, S.R., Rupprecht, C.D.D., Niles, D. et al. Sustainable agrifood systems for a post-growth world. *Nat Sustain* 5, 1011–1017 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-022-00933-5>

redevelop the artisanal area, enhance the architectural heritage of the hill town of Roccavaldina, and bring the territory to zero emissions through reforestation and other interventions. The operational proposals guiding the evolution of the territory and the local community have been advanced through a bottom-up approach by the Fondazione MeSSInA, which serves as the promoting and managing entity of what is referred to as the Distretto Sociale Evoluto (DSE).

PLOUCS is a prime example of SSE cluster development that embodies several good practices aligning with the principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB). The organisation promotes social entrepreneurship, sustainability and community resilience to contribute to the economic and social development of the Landes region. Founded in 2017, PLOUCS focuses on promoting the SSE in the region by supporting cooperatives, associations and social enterprises. It provides training and guidance to its members, contributing to the growth of local SSE activities. In 2023, PLOUCS was designated as a PTCE, highlighting its commitment to SSE development and cooperation in the region. PTCEs like PLOUCS play a vital role in promoting the SSE and addressing contemporary economic and social challenges through local collaboration. PLOUCS supports the circular economy, sustainable agriculture, and soft mobility projects, promoting a socially responsible local economy. The organisation also promotes SSE values through education and collaboration with local authorities and schools. PLOUCS fosters networking among SSE players and other organisations to achieve its mission of building resilient communities. It is committed to addressing socio-economic challenges in the Landes region, particularly unemployment and economic insecurity in rural areas, by supporting projects that address energy poverty, encourage physical accessibility and inclusiveness for individuals with disabilities, and provide affordable housing for low-income households. These initiatives directly contribute to social and environmental sustainability in the region. Moreover, PLOUCS goes beyond the NEB's "prioritising the places and people that need it the most" axis and intersects with other thematic axes. By promoting sustainable agriculture and circular economy projects and encouraging the use of natural materials in construction and manufacturing, PLOUCS aligns with the NEB's goal of fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of the value of nature. PLOUCS also focuses on creating beautiful, sustainable and inclusive projects that contribute to a sense of belonging among individuals and communities. By enhancing public spaces that encourage social interaction and community engagement, and promoting energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable buildings and homes, PLOUCS helps strengthen social cohesion and communities. PLOUCS is actively contributing to the regeneration of communities, the natural environment, and the way we think, aligning with the NEB's mission to create more resilient and sustainable communities across Europe.

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS OF THE CASES

This section provides a comparison of the main elements of the cases which can be used to discuss transferability and replication. It also summarises and compares strengths and weaknesses that can represent useful learning elements for peer learning.

Policy framework

PLOUCS

PLOUCS has been created as a PTCE in the framework of the French Law on Social and Solidarity Economy which establishes the PTCE as a tool to encourage cooperation between ESS actors and to strengthen their role in territorial development. PTCEs are groups of ESS actors, such as associations, cooperatives, social enterprises, local authorities, universities, and other partners, working together to develop economic, social and environmental projects in a given territory.

PLOUCS has been certified at PTCE phase 1, the phase dedicated to the creation and initial development of the PTCE. This includes mobilising stakeholders, defining objectives and setting up pilot projects. The law also foresees a Phase 2 of a PTCE, often called the "Acceleration Phase", carried out in response to a CEI (call for expressions of interest). This second phase generally occurs after the PTCE has established its bases and demonstrated its effectiveness in promoting the social and solidarity economy (ESS) in its territory.

The certification of PLOUCS as a PTCE guarantees recognition from public institutions and access to public funding, and facilitates its impact on the territory.

PLOUCS has also the state "People Youth Education" certification, a quality label which recognises the educational value of the association and facilitates its access to public funding.

Roccalvaldina and DSE

The success of the initiative in Roccalvaldina can be attributed to a combination of national and local policies and programmes that promote sustainable development, social innovation and economic revitalisation. Understanding the various policy areas and initiatives at both the national and local levels that contributed to the project's success is crucial. Additionally, the initiative's focus on developing social green enterprises and supporting businesses through social inclusion aligns with the Social Economy Action Plan¹¹ and the recent Transition Pathway of the Proximity and Social Economy Ecosystem,¹² which privilege economic activities that prioritise social and environmental objectives. National policies that

¹¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1537&langId=en>

¹² https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/transition-pathway_en

support the SSE may have been a factor in fostering such enterprises. The Italian government recognised the importance of social economy actors in 1990 with the passage of law 142/1990. This led to the establishment of the principle of subsidiarity in 2000. Social cooperatives, defined by law 381/1991, became a pivotal milestone in the legal development of the Italian social economy. Moreover, Italy was the first country in Europe to introduce a law on social enterprises in 2005, law 118/2005. Although this law gained little traction due to perceived limitations and drawbacks, it laid the foundation for further dialogue with third sector organisations, resulting in the Third Sector Reform and the legislative decree in 2017.¹³

The policy framework underlying the development of Roccavaldina and the DSE is characterised by a participatory approach and active involvement of territorial associations, reflecting a commitment to encouraging community engagement and participation in various development projects. This approach adheres to the principles of the Italian Third Sector Reform and the subsequent legislative decree (Third Sector Code 117/2017) which redefined the role of social enterprises and their inclusion within the third sector.

Roccavaldina's strategic planning fostered public-private collaboration. The Third Sector Code defines co-planning and co-design processes to identify societal needs, formulate strategies and translate them into concrete activities. This approach ensures public funds are invested in activities with proven value and validity while valuing the third sector's bottom-up perspective in identifying and addressing community needs.¹⁴

Furthermore, the support for renewable energy projects, such as the diffuse solar park, have benefited from national renewable energy policies and incentives that promote clean energy production. Initiatives related to cultural enterprises and the enhancement of architectural heritage have received support from national cultural preservation and promotion policies and programmes.

To achieve success in initiatives like the one in Roccavaldina, a combination of national and local policies and initiatives working in synergy is essential. At the local level, the involvement of the Municipality of Roccavaldina was crucial, particularly in granting the use of the abandoned craft area, demonstrating local support and cooperation.

Governance structure

PLOUCS

PLOUCS's mode of governance reflects its objectives of cooperation, and its functioning as a democratic and collegial body. It has a general assembly composed of all its members, which elects the board of directors composed of five organisations which operate collegially. The

¹³ For more info <https://www.diesis.coop/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Feasibility-Study-Diesis-LISVA-02032023.pdf>

¹⁴ OECD (2022), "Case study – Law on Social Cooperatives in Italy: Adjustment of an existing cooperative law to support social enterprise development", in *Designing Legal Frameworks for Social Enterprises: Practical Guidance for Policy Makers*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

board of directors meets every month to take stock of current actions, past actions and future actions. The agenda is prepared by the coordinator and decisions are made by mutual consent or, if there is disagreement, by vote.

Each year, PLOUCS organises four half-days meetings with its members called «*Les Tous Pour Un PLOUCS*» (all for one PLOUCS). These meetings are conceived as a moment of exchange, common reflection and discussion on issues and questions relevant to the global functioning of the association, and contribute to orienting the actions of PLOUCS.

Additionally in 2021, the association organised a major event called «*Les assises du Ploucs*» (Ploucs Convention), where different working groups were set up by the members to work collaboratively on PLOUCS's project axes (WG on Youth, WG on agriculture and WG on cooperation among members).

Roccavaldina and DSE

The MeSSInA Foundation plays an important role in the governance of the initiative. It manages and promotes the project, coordinates various activities, and approves fundamental guidelines, strategic directions and budgets. To ensure that the policies and practices of public bodies, organisations and enterprises align with local community principles, the governance structure uses a participatory democracy process known as Socially Responsible Territory (TSR).¹⁵

The governance of the DSE in Roccavaldina is structured to ensure effective control, community involvement, and alignment with the foundation's objectives. It incorporates various committees, a participatory democracy process, and engagement with key local stakeholders to guide and evaluate the initiative's activities and investments. This structure is designed to ensure effective governance and control, as well as the active involvement of local communities in specific territorial interventions while aligning with the statutory objectives. Here is a breakdown of how the governance of the DSE works:

MeSSInA Foundation - Ente Filantropico: This foundation plays a central role in the governance of the initiative. It is administered by a secretary general who also serves as the legal representative of the organisation. Its board is responsible for approving fundamental guidelines, strategic directions, the appointment of the secretary general, and budgets.

Committees:

DSE Committee: Comprised of Ecos-Med soc. coop. soc., the Sol.E. Consortium, and the Horcynus Orca Foundation, this committee contributes to the governance and direction of the DSE;

¹⁵ This brochure contains a short introduction to Territorial Social Responsibility®: https://www.revesnetwork.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Giunta_imp.pdf

Founders' Committee: Made up of the foundation's founding members, this committee also plays a role in the decision-making process;

Committee of Networks: This committee represents national and international networks to which the foundation belongs, adding to the diversity of perspectives and expertise in the governance structure.

Committee of Territorial Clusters: This committee focuses on areas outside the Messina Metropolitan Area, ensuring that the initiatives address various territorial contexts;

Committee of Trustees: The Committee of Trustees plays a critical role in evaluating the congruity between the investments and activities implemented and the statutory objectives of the MeSSInA Foundation. It includes representatives from local authorities, grantors and institutions;

Scientific Committee: This committee is composed of experts in various fields related to local economic, social and cultural development. They provide consultation and contribute to defining the cultural and fundamental guidelines of the initiative.

Socially Responsible Territory (TSR): The governance structure employs a participatory democracy process known as TSR to ensure that policies and practices align with local community principles. TSR involves four phases: context analysis, elaboration, evaluation, and reprogramming. This process fosters community involvement and builds social cohesion and capital.

Local stakeholders:

Roccalvaldina Municipal Technical/Administrative Office: This office is crucial for advancing the various initiatives as it provides the necessary technical expertise and experience required for project implementation;

Community: Citizen involvement is essential for designing and implementing a broader environmental and social transition programme for the area, ensuring that the initiative reflects the community's needs and values;

Local companies and territorial associations: Local businesses, including those in the agricultural, hospitality and catering sectors, represent a significant economic presence. Their involvement is vital, but the governance structure must consider the potential costs and time constraints they may face. The territorial associations are important for promoting local culture, its preservation, and future development within the DSE.

Financial aspects

Financial aspects are taken into consideration from two different perspectives. On the one hand, it is important to understand how the premises have been regenerated and or reconstructed and which financial resources have been used (e.g. public funding, EU funding, private sponsors,

banks). On the other hand, it is necessary to understand the financial resources mix the place is using to finance its running costs.

PLOUCS

The creation of PLOUCS was mainly funded by the funds allocated by the state and the local authorities to PTECs.

For ongoing operations, PLOUCS operates thanks to the support of public institutions and local authorities. It has an overall budget of approximately €134,000 per year. The budget includes state and local (*département*) operational grants to support the operational costs of the structure and project-based funding to support the activities and the services carried out by PLOUCS. While the operation of the structure is funded only by state and department public funds, the projects and services are funded by a mixture of different sources. The incubator for social economy projects is mainly funded by the ESF with a small amount of co-financing of national, regional, local and own funds. The educational and awareness-raising activities are funded by regional and local public authorities but also by the revenues of selling the animation of a game to schools. The activity of networking and cooperation is funded by the region, while the support to local social economy initiatives is funded from national sources. Funds for youth activities come from various public sources while a private foundation makes a contribution for the promotion of entrepreneurship. A small percentage of the revenues is represented by membership fees and donations.

Roccalvaldina and DSE

At the national level, the initiative appears to have leveraged funding opportunities provided by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), a programme aimed at addressing economic and social challenges through various projects, including those related to local economic development, innovation and sustainability.

Regarding **premises regeneration**, the municipality of Roccalvaldina received €1,600,000 from the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, which is funded through NextGeneration EU funds (Ghadan Project). This funding is a significant source of public funding to support urban and social regeneration projects in historic villages. In addition, the Metamorphosis Project received funding of €944,755.10 from the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. This funding likely contributed to the redevelopment of the historic village, as well as associated projects such as a research/training and production centre.

Several projects are currently under way to revitalise various areas and communities. These projects receive support from a combination of public and private funding sources. For example, the ENV-IT-Life-Restart project focuses on research and development initiatives in the Olivettian pole of Roccalvaldina. It benefits from funding through the LIFE programme, with contributions from both the public and private sectors. The Ghadan (Tomorrow) programme aims to strategically enhance the Borgo di Roccalvaldina. Funding for this project comes from NRRP Funds M1 C3 Intervention 2.1, which combines resources from the public and private sectors. Furthermore, other funds play a vital role in starting production and

training functions within the Olivettian Pole. Lastly, the Borghi Enterprises - NRRP project is aimed at attracting, promoting and consolidating entrepreneurial ventures in the historic village of Roccavaldina. Financial support for this project comes through the Borghi Enterprises - NRRP programme, which combines public and private funding to achieve its objectives.

Various activities such as cultural, tourist, commercial, agrifood and craft initiatives are likely to generate revenue that can cover their running costs. The Inner Areas Strategies programme, funded by NRRP funds through the Azienda Sanitaria Provinciale (ASP) of Messina, is experimenting with Community Hubs to provide people access to various services and resources such as healthcare, education and job training. The NRRP funds for ongoing operating costs may support these hubs. They aim to serve as a central location where people can access different resources and services. The Valle del Tirreno Union of Municipalities aims to promote socio-economic development in the region, and indirectly contributes to the running costs of various projects and initiatives in Roccavaldina. This is an association of several municipalities working together to achieve common goals. Internal Area Funding is not specifically for running costs, but provides financial support for small and micro-enterprises in the area, recognising Roccavaldina as an internal area. The funding aims to enhance local economic development by promoting entrepreneurship and innovation. This support can indirectly contribute to the running costs of various projects and initiatives by generating revenue and increasing economic activity in the area.

Role of social economy enterprises

PLOUCS

The promotion of social economy enterprises is embedded in the mission of PLOUCS. The association was created in 2017 in response to a need identified in the Landes: strengthening social and solidarity economy and its principles of solidarity, social entrepreneurship and sustainable development. PLOUCS members are themselves social economy organisations and PLOUCS operates according to social economy principles. All the projects that PLOUCS supports are social economy projects and most of them have an activity based on the circular economy. The PLOUCS incubator is supporting 12 projects in 2023 compared to 10 in 2022, and aims to support 2 to 4 more in 2024.

PLOUCS supports and encourages the development of local social economy initiatives, including the promotion of cooperatives, associations, social enterprises and other forms of social entrepreneurship in the Landes. PLOUCS offers training to strengthen and support its SE members. In addition, it benefits from the national Guide'Asso label which allows it to direct SE structures towards the right contacts and interlocutors. PLOUCS organises Youth Service Cooperatives (CJSes), which allow young people aged 16 to 20 to participate in cooperative projects during the summer.

Roccavaldina and DSE

The district's approach focuses on social economy principles, which create opportunities for the entire community, including vulnerable segments, and foster cooperation networks beyond family connections. The primary objective is to create social capital and cohesion. The planning and development phase of the district follows the co-programming and co-design methodology, a bottom-up approach that involves local communities in shaping the development of the territory. This aligns with social economy principles of community involvement and shared decision-making.

The foundation has been operating the DSE since 2010 and has successfully supported and financed over 200 enterprises and micro-enterprises. It has created and maintained over 600 jobs, many of which are held by people who have experienced exclusion and fragility. The foundation has focused on supporting businesses that are regenerated by workers, such as worker buyouts. Additionally, it has promoted cultural enterprises that concentrate on innovation for the improvement of architectural heritage, including the creation of immersive and interactive stage sets. It has also supported enterprises in the design and fashion sector. It has played a significant role in the development of women's enterprises in ethical fashion, such as wedding dresses, sustainable fashion accessories and similar items.

Strengths and weaknesses

	PLOUCS	<u>Roccavaldina and DSE</u>
Policy Framework	<p>S. Formal recognition: PLOUCS is certified as a PTCE, which provides recognition from public institutions and access to public funding.</p> <p>S. Local government support: PLOUCS benefits from the involvement of the local municipality, demonstrating local support and cooperation. On the other hand, PLOUCS is dedicated to supporting the social and solidarity economy (SSE) in the region.</p>	<p>S. Formal recognition: Italy has a strong record of recognising the importance of social economy actors and enacting supportive legislation. The policy framework in both regions reflects a commitment to encouraging community engagement and participation, in line with the Italian Third Sector Reform principles.</p> <p>S. Local government support: The Municipality of Roccavaldina played a crucial role in granting the use of the abandoned craft area, which demonstrates the local support for the initiative.</p>
	<p>W. Long processes. PLOUCS went through a certification process with phases. Its effectiveness in promoting ESS in its territory may take time to establish, which could delay impact.</p>	<p>W. Not up to date. The policy framework does not explicitly address the potential challenges in transitioning from one phase to another and ensuring continuous support for initiatives.</p>

	<p>W. Regulatory complexity. The policy framework may involve complex regulatory and certification processes, which could be challenging for organisations to navigate.</p> <p>W. Policy change: Impact of changes in government policy or public funding.</p>	<p>W. Regulatory complexity. While comprehensive, the complexity of the Italian legal framework for social enterprises may be burdensome for some organisations, potentially limiting their ability to benefit from it.</p>
Governance structure	<p>S. The general assembly includes all members, allowing diverse perspectives in decision-making.</p> <p>S. The board of directors meet monthly to ensure timely decision-making and organisational efficiency.</p> <p>S. Regular meetings with members show commitment to engagement and input from constituents, fostering ownership and investment in the organisation's success.</p> <p>S. Collaborative decision-making uses a collegial governance structure for consensus-based decision-making. It leads to better decisions and promotes unity among members.</p>	<p>S. Clear and well-structured management plan.</p> <p>S. Strong cohesion among stakeholders.</p> <p>S. Excellent cooperation with local authorities.</p> <p>S. The participatory approach promotes community engagement, ensuring that development projects are aligned with the needs and wants of the community.</p>
	<p>W. Complexity in maintaining strategic partnerships.</p> <p>W. Decision-making by mutual consent or vote may lead to delays in consensus.</p> <p>W. The governance structure does not explicitly involve external stakeholders, which could limit diverse perspectives.</p>	<p>W. The complex governance structure with multiple committees and stakeholders may lead to administrative challenges and potential inefficiencies.</p> <p>W. Balancing the involvement of various stakeholders, including local businesses and associations, can be complex and time-consuming.</p>
Financial aspect	<p>S. Initial creation funded by state and local authorities' allocations to PTCEs.</p> <p>S. Diverse funding sources for different activities, including public funds, ESF, regional and local authorities, private foundation</p>	<p>S. Leveraging opportunities provided by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) for premises regeneration and economic and social development.</p> <p>S. Various projects receive support from a es.</p>

	contributions, and membership fees and donations.	S. Revenue generation from cultural, tourist, commercial, agrifood, and craft initiatives to cover running costs.
	W. Insufficient funding: Difficulty securing stable long-term funding for activities and projects. W. Human resources: Limited staff and funding constraints.	W. Concerns about long-term sustainability. W. Reliance on diverse sources of funding may require efficient management to ensure financial stability. W. Administrative capacity limitations: Limited capacity of the municipality's technical/administrative structure to meet the territory's needs and manage public funds effectively.
Social economy role	S. Commitment to SSE: Strong commitment to promoting social and solidarity economy (SSE) in the region. Active role in raising awareness of SSE and its principles. S. SSE project incubator: Offering valuable support to social entrepreneurs and SSE businesses. S. PTCEs like PLOUCS encourage cooperation between various ESS actors to develop economic, social, and environmental projects.	S. Grounded in social economy principles: The district's approach is firmly based on social economy principles, which prioritise community welfare and cooperation. S. Build social capital and foster social cohesion, emphasising community involvement and shared decision-making. S. Economic impact: The MeSSInA Foundation's history of supporting over 200 social enterprises and micro-enterprises is a significant strength, leading to job creation and economic impact.
	W. Evolving community needs: Adapting to changing community priorities.	W. Inadequate infrastructure and demographic decline can hinder economic and social development by affecting the efficiency of services and people.

S = Strengths

W = Weaknesses

ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO THE NEB COMPASS VALUES AND WORKING PRINCIPLES

The New European Bauhaus Compass¹⁶ is a guiding framework for decision and project makers wishing to apply the NEB principles and criteria to their activities.

Published in January 2023, the Compass sets out the key characteristics for exemplary NEB projects.

The NEB Compass describes the three core values of the initiative and traces the path for a project to become truly “NEB”. The Compass also sets out three working principles that apply across the system of values. For each value and for each working principle, the NEB Compass presents three levels of ambition. Each project will have its specific mix of ambitions, depending on context and resource available.

We propose here an assessment of the two practices presented based on the methodology and guiding questions proposed by the NEB Compass.¹⁷

NEB Compass Values

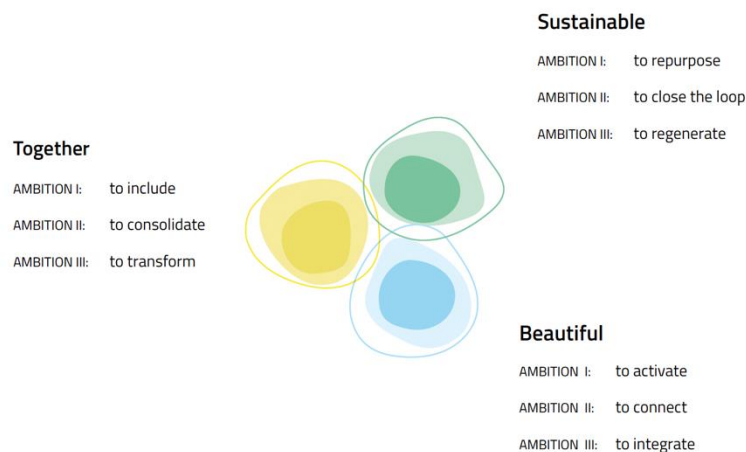


Figure 1. NEB compass Value. Source JRC, European Commission

¹⁶ https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/system/files/2023-01/NEB_Compass_V_4.pdf

¹⁷ https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/document/405245f4-6859-4090-b145-1db88f91596d_en

NEB Compass
Working Principles

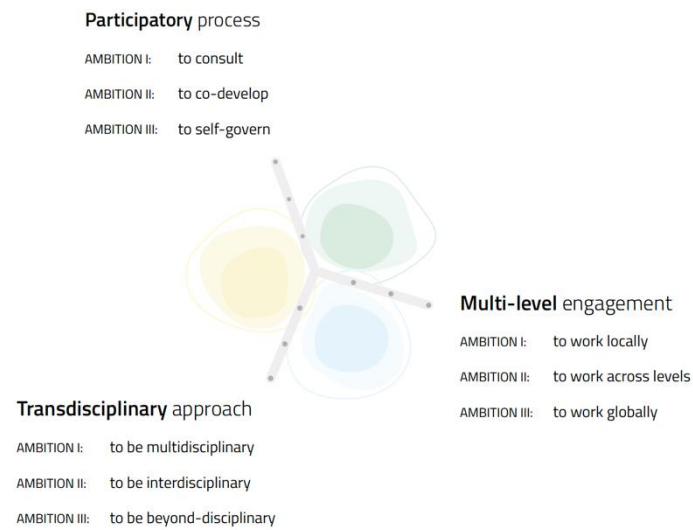


Figure 2. NEB compass working principles. Source JRC, European Commission

TABLE: NEB COMPASS ASSESSMENT

	PLOUCS	Roccavaldina and DSE
NEB VALUES		
BEAUTIFUL	<p><u>Ambition III to integrate</u></p> <p>Projects in arts and culture, including the creation of a collective to disseminate and promote art, Organisation Arts et Landes, whose goal is to promote art within the region. The artworks made by local artists are loaned to local libraries and can also be borrowed by local citizens with the aim of promoting and disseminating art and bringing it closer to citizens, especially the most vulnerable groups who would otherwise not have access to it.</p> <p>To formalise its engagement, PLOUCS will become a <i>Fabrique à initiative</i> in December, a structured initiative that stems from the assessment and analysis of a social need, a project idea or a place to facilitate the co-construction of economic activities of social interest with the engagement of local actors.</p> <p>To achieve these purposes, PLOUCS has an ongoing partnership with Association Territoires et innovation sociale (ATIS), a network in Nouvelle Aquitaine, which foresees the implementation of community dialogues and consultations to support the rural regeneration of a community of rural municipalities. In the first year, the project assessed the needs and opportunities available in the territory. The final choice was the regeneration of a barn. During the second year, the project took charge of the building and facilitated</p>	<p><u>Ambition III to integrate</u></p> <p>The ecosystemic approach includes the aesthetic improvement of local buildings and spaces through land art, which in turn enhances the sense of belonging to these spaces. It also includes actions of biodiversity preservation, e.g. the planting of over 2,000 trees in the former landfill, which will allow the municipality of Roccavaldina to become carbon negative and compensate for the surrounding villages, extending the act of collective care beyond the human community.</p> <p>The horizontal dimension of governance, for example, through the promotion of workers' buyouts and cooperative business models, with the understanding that these are the forms that best express it. DSE's aim is to enhance the shared participation and local ownership of experiences, whether these are economic, scientific, cultural or political, and to ensure that the resulting impact is truly permeable to the voices and needs of the local community.</p>

	the creation of a collective of citizens to codesign the regeneration and future communal use of the place.	
SUSTAINABLE	<p><u>Ambition II to close the loop</u> PLOUCS supports circular economy, sustainable agriculture, and soft mobility projects, promoting a socially responsible local economy. These initiatives directly contribute to environmental sustainability in the region. An example of projects centred on circular production and promotion of green mobility, still in the R&D phase, is a local project and enterprise whose core business is renting bicycles to tourists. It is currently trying to develop a prototype that would allow it to turn bicycle inner tubes into tar, to then build cycle paths.</p>	<p><u>Ambition III to regenerate</u> Circular economy is at the core of the DSE experience. The Olivettian Pole can be considered as a circular economy hub in the region, housing the different steps of the process: research and development of the materials, co-design with the local community of bioplastics products, sustainable production and final shipment of the manufactured goods to partner agricultural cooperatives in Italy that will use the end products.</p> <p>The hub will also be a pole for green job training and upskilling, as the vulnerable groups employed will receive in-house training and will be ensured lifelong learning opportunities.</p>
TOGETHER	<p><u>Ambition III to transform</u> Social inclusion is at the heart of every project PLOUCS implements and supports in the region. PLOUCS was born as a collective and continues to operate and think of itself as an exercise in collective thinking, engagement and agency. The aim is always to ensure the inclusion of as many citizens and local people as possible, which leads to enhanced sensitivity in its communication, both internal and external, and in the organisation of its activities and events. PLOUCS is also engaged as an expert in collaborative design tools, which allows it to get involved in training and develop non-formal education tools for local foundations and grant managers.</p> <p>PLOUCS also supports the creation and acceleration of local social enterprises that favour the inclusion of vulnerable groups such as vulnerable youth and people with disabilities and promote youth social entrepreneurship.</p>	<p><u>Ambition III to transform</u> DSE represents a centre for social inclusion and enhanced access to economic resources, sustainable and fair employment and alternative energetic opportunities in the region.</p> <p>It serves as a place for integrating the most vulnerable groups into the labour market, ensuring need-based employment opportunities for people with intellectual and physical disabilities. These services are carried out in close partnership with the local municipality, which acts as intermediary in the identification of the beneficiaries and in the determination of the accessibility criteria.</p> <p>The access to the sustainable energy produced through the solar plants will also be determined on the basis of the most vulnerable, giving priorities to those at risk of energy poverty.</p>

NEB WORKING PRINCIPLES		
PARTICIPATORY process	<p><u>Ambition II to co-develop</u></p> <p>As an example of a social economy cluster, PLOUCS has a participative governance structure that encourages and ensures the active and democratic participation of its members and stakeholders. This process is entrusted with the definition of its strategic framework of action through the collective decision-making process within its annual general assembly, board of directors and related governance bodies and through a continuous dialogue that involves all relevant stakeholders, especially local community representatives, in the implementation of its pilot projects and innovative activities.</p>	<p><u>Ambition II co-develop</u></p> <p>There are three levels of engagement of the local actors and stakeholders: first, the participatory processes include the members of the cluster, that support the identification, codesign and implementation of the activities.</p> <p>The second layer is the local community, which is involved in the codesign of the process of regeneration, through the direct participation of citizens in community dialogues and through their representatives and stakeholders. The community is also involved in the implementation and activation of the regenerated spaces, through workshops, training and events.</p> <p>The third layer is the mutual exchange partnership established with the local municipality through a strategic committee that includes local community stakeholders, thus allowing the processes described above to mutually impact on each other. The foundations are laid for the process to aim for Ambition III – to self-govern, but admittedly is a long process.</p>
MULTI-LEVEL engagement	<p><u>Ambition III to work globally</u></p> <p>As a regional cluster, PLOUCS engages with a strong local network of actors and stakeholders. PLOUCS is also involved in national and European projects and promotes its social and sustainable agriculture initiatives in cooperation with local partners in the Maghreb area.</p> <p>Especially for the <i>coopératives jeunesse de services</i>, its engagement reaches the national and international levels: the aim is to ensure the mutual sharing of knowledge and practices among similar experiences with other European clusters through peer exchanges (e.g. with the Italian social</p>	<p><u>Ambition III to work globally</u></p> <p>Both individually and as a cluster, the entities of DSE are part of a number of national and international networks, favouring the exchange of practices and expertise and enhancing funding opportunities, especially with realities that have the same level of complexity. DSE is also part of several European projects.</p>

	economy ecosystem) and further spread these experiences and methodologies, an example being the participation of young social entrepreneurs from PLOUCS in the Global Social and Solidarity Economy Forum in Dakar, Senegal in 2023.	
TRANSDISCIPLINARY approach	<p><u>Ambition III to be beyond disciplinary</u></p> <p>The activities and structuring of PLOUCS shows an interplay of political, social, economic and environmental considerations that impact the strategic definition of its priorities and the methodologies and tools for engagement, stakeholder consultation and implementation of its activities and how these are disseminated internally and externally. Across all levels, PLOUCS has solid formal and non-formal interactions – with the public administration, with academia (University of Bordeaux), and partnership with civil society, in line with the quadruple-helix model. The ultimate goal is to promote a new way of defining and managing shared spaces, both physical and in terms of a community of people.</p>	<p><u>Ambition III to be beyond disciplinary</u></p> <p>The underlying ambition is to contribute to the creation of a new system, based on a new economic model and an understanding of the human experience that is radically different. This idea is intrinsically connected with the awareness that there is a value and a potential in beautiful spaces and territories, that enhance the sense of belonging for the local community, favour the exchange of knowledge and practices among different industries and expertise involved in the process, and act as a catalyst for sustainable, human-centred development.</p>

SPECIFICATION OF ISSUES FOR LEARNING AND DISCUSSION

1. Public funding is necessary to start complex regeneration projects. But, once the regeneration is achieved, projects should become self-sustainable and/or raise a mix of financial resources to pay for their running costs and activities.

Funding mechanism:

What different kinds of sources of financing can be used?

What could the role of private investors/sponsors be?

What about commercial and income-generating activities?

How to manage and match funds coming from different sources (e.g. EU, national, local, private) and for different goals (e.g. infrastructures, cultural and social activities)?

What are the best practices for creating self-sustainable projects that can generate their own financial resources?

2. Naturally, the proximity and social economy ecosystem has an excellent ability to network and create collaborations among the ecosystems. For instance, social economy organisations are often part of wider networks that allow them to interact, collaborate, exchange, learn from each other and act jointly. Although social economy organisations have great collaboration capacity, they need help interacting with non-social economy actors. Partnerships models and governance are essential for regenerating a place for the community. They can bring together diverse expertise and resources to support regeneration efforts. They can help ensure that regeneration efforts are inclusive, sustainable, and accountable to the community, resulting in tangible benefits for all stakeholders.

Partnerships models and governance:

What are the most efficient partnership models?

Who are the relevant stakeholders to be involved and with which role? Namely: public sector, local community (organised how?), academia, social economy, private enterprises etc.

How to ensure a governance model which is at the same time effective, efficient and representative of all the stakeholders' interests?

What are the best practices for effective governance and planning of regeneration projects?

Role of social economy organisations:

What is the role of SEOs involved in the cases?

How do the projects promote the development of SEOs?

What are the main benefits for SEOs?

What are the main difficulties for SEOs?

3. As emerged from the analysed cases, regeneration projects should prioritise community involvement and input to ensure that the projects align with community priorities and support local development. Cultural engagement is also crucial in complex regeneration projects to maintain a community's cultural heritage and promote cultural diversity. Lastly, environmental sustainability should be integrated into complex regeneration projects. Incorporating green spaces, such as parks and gardens, can improve air quality and reduce urban heat islands. Promoting sustainable mobility and using energy-efficient building designs and materials can reduce energy consumption and lower costs. By prioritising sustainable environmental actions, regeneration projects can create a more livable, resilient and sustainable future for the community.

Local development and community engagement:

How does this kind of regenerative project impact on local development?

What are the main benefits for territories and local communities?

What are the effects on employment and social inclusion?

How can regeneration projects contribute to the overall economic growth of a region?

Environmental sustainability and cultural perspective:

How can regeneration projects prioritise and incorporate environmental sustainability?

What are the best practices for ensuring that regeneration projects have a positive impact on the environment?

How can regeneration projects ensure that they do not displace or harm local cultural communities?

PROJECT PARTNERS

The SEA4NEB project consortium is composed by:



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