

## International Social Economy Research Conference 2025 in Bordeaux

(Sciences Po Bordeaux), 27-29 octobre 2025)

### « SSE's role in the socio-ecological transition »

#### Framework proposal

On April 18, 2023, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution recognizing that "social and solidarity economy can contribute to the achievement and localization of the Sustainable Development Goals"<sup>1</sup>. In other words, the social and solidarity economy (SSE) appears as a lever for implementing the socio-ecological transition in territories, through a logic that is both multi-actor and multi-scalar (SDG 17 on "doing together" / partnerships). However, we need to define this more precisely. Research into the relationship between the SSE and local development has been well established for some twenty years, yet it is still rare to find explicit reference to the socio-ecological transition, while socio-economic initiatives abound at local level and transition scenarios stress territorial cooperation strategies in which SSE players are particularly involved.

We propose to study the synergies between the territorial dynamics of the SSE and the socio-ecological transition, defined by the ILO as having to "greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind". This transition, described as "just", concerns not only ecology, but also the transition to a formal economy and the digital transition, particularly for the self-employed. This raises the broader question of the SSE's ability to regulate the economy<sup>2</sup>. What role do SSE territorial dynamics play in the socio-ecological transition? In the current multi-faceted crisis, is the SSE merely a shock absorber? Is the SSE condemned to seeing its social innovations confined to a reparative logic, or recuperated by the State or the market in the event of success? Or could it be the start of a shift? Can it develop sufficiently to take on all or part of the socio-ecological transition without calling into question the dominant socio-economic regime as a whole? Or does it, on the contrary, provide the foundations for an alternative socio-economic regime based on a twofold reembedding of the economy into society and nature?

To address these questions, we need to propose a global approach to the SSE. This is why the analysis of the territory, as a meso-economic space bearing a relative autonomy from the global regime, has been preferred<sup>3</sup>. It offers a framework for conceiving not only a theory of the SSE in transition on a local scale, but also a theory of transformation, i.e. of the meso/macro dialectic without which the transition would remain incomplete. This theoretical approach represents a major innovation for the SSE, which is often criticized for being more of a *technè* than an *epistémè*. However, it needs to be implemented in close collaboration with socio-

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations General Assembly Resolution, April 18<sup>th</sup> 2023 on "Promoting the social and solidarity economy for sustainable development".

<sup>2</sup> Robert Boyer, *L'économie sociale et solidaire. Une utopie réaliste pour le XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle ?*, Paris, Les Petits Matins, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Lamarche *et al.*, « Saisir les processus méso : une approche régulationniste », *Économie appliquée*, n°1, 2021, p.13-49.

economic players, who will consolidate its empirical foundations through their experiments and find resources to reinforce their impact.

With this in mind, the Social Economy Research Conference intends to place social-ecological transition at the heart of three processes: 1. SSE in transition; 2. the territorial regimes of SSE in transition; 3. the transformation strategies of SSE in transition. These elements will constitute the three questions running through the research conference and all its themes.

### 1. *SSE in transition*

What is SSE in transition, meaning SSE that contributes to the socio-ecological transition? It is easy to hypothesize that, while the SSE is predisposed to transition, only part of its field is committed to it, since the SSE was first built to serve its members, and at a time when the ecological question was invisibilized. But what are its contours? The transition is contributing to the recomposition of the boundaries of public action, which necessarily impacts SSE organizations, whose mediating functions between particular interests and the general interest are mobilized. Are there SSE phases in transition? How does the SSE integrate justice, of which it is historically the bearer, into the transition? How does it manage to preserve its specific features while capitalism itself takes over the transition? This may concern a particular sector, but more generally it refers to the conditions for the emergence of a SSE in transition, and the steps needed to achieve it. What are the clues that make it possible to grasp this SSE in transition? Can we locate the coordinates of each of these organizations on a map of the SSE in transition?

### 2. *Territorial regimes of SSE in transition*

This institutional approach to SSE organizations refers more broadly to the arrangements into which they fit. While SSE is defined by specific rules at the level of its organizations (democratic governance, non-profit, social utility), it is above all a meso-economic space that is empowered by its collaborative processes, i.e. by its synergies both between SSE components and with their allies, whether public or private, to create system effects (production, consumption, credit, finance, insurance, etc.)<sup>4</sup>. This is in line with new approaches that seek to embed SSE in a project that goes beyond it, such as the commons<sup>5</sup>, which propose embedding the economy in local communities, and thus making ecosystems, whether territorial or sectoral, the agents of change. What are the territorial dynamics of SSE in transition to rethink modes of organization and governance? How can we support the players? What progress indicators are needed to support co-construction processes? This involves analyzing, from the point of view of the SSE in transition, modes of collective action as well as systemic and ecosystemic regulation methods in territories.

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<sup>4</sup> Nadine Richez-Battesti et Thomas Lamarche. (dir.). (2023). *Approches mésoéconomiques des coopératives des régulations socio-politiques* [numéro 34]. *Revue de la régulation, capitalisme, institutions, pouvoirs*. <https://doi.org/10.4000/regulation.21951>

<sup>5</sup> Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the commons : the evolution of institutions for collective action*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990.

### 3. Transformation strategies of SSE in transition

The risk of a territorial approach, however, would be to constrain SSE to the local and to a role as a crutch for the dominant socio-economic regime. As a result, it needs to be embedded in a theory of transformation that reformulates the meso-macro dialectic<sup>6</sup>. How can the SSE in transition influence the socio-economic regime, or even replace it? Under what conditions can territorial regimes and SSE ecosystems reach the global order? Which sectors should SSE prioritize? This refers in particular to approaches to transformative social innovation (TSI), which are concerned with "the process by which social innovation challenges, modifies or replaces dominant institutions in a specific socio-material context"<sup>7</sup>, i.e. a socio-technical system and a socio-political system geared to the living world. Within the latter, a new field is opening up concerning their capacity to change scale in order to make a success of the transition, based on polycentric governance with an approach that is not only integral, managing to cover the main economic relationships, but also translocal, organizing at both local and extra-local levels<sup>8</sup>.

#### List of topics

1. SSE statistics, reporting and social impact measurements
2. SSE and the ecological and energy sectors
3. SSE territorial ecosystems and transition
4. SSE identities, hybridizations and innovations
5. Financing and its organizations
6. SSE networks and public policies
7. SSE, education & civic rights
8. SSE, decent work and the informal economy
9. SSE and the fight against poverty and the care economy
10. SSE and agri-food system
11. Commons and cooperative public services
12. SSE and intersectionality
13. Other

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<sup>6</sup> Benoît Lévesque, « Les innovations sociales et les transformations : un enchaînement qui ne va pas de soi », in Juan-Luis Klein *et al.* (dir.), *La transformation sociale par l'innovation sociale*, Québec, PUQ, p.21-33.

<sup>7</sup> Bonno Pel *et al.*, « Towards a theory of transformative social innovation : A relational framework and 12 propositions », *Research Policy*, Vol. 49, Issue 8, October 2020, Disponible à l'adresse : <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S004873332030158X>

<sup>8</sup> Kristiaan P.W. Kok *et al.*, « Governing translocal experimentation in multi-sited transition programs and challenges », *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, Vol. 43, June 2022, p.393-407.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### → Timetable

15 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Deadline for submission of abstracts
18 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Notification of acceptance
26 <sup>th</sup> September 2025	Deadline for submission of final paper and conference registration

### → Submit your abstract

Platform for abstract submission: <https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/51700/submitter>

- Language of abstracts and papers: English, Spanish and French.
- Abstract: max. 700 words, including 5 keywords and min. 5 references.
- Full papers: max. 8000 words, including 5 keywords and all references.
- Compatible formats: Microsoft Word (.doc, .docx).
- Times New Roman 12 point, double-spaced, 2.5 cm margin all around. References may be single-spaced. Be sure to number pages.
- Name your file: Corresponding author's name in capital letters\_CIRIEC\_Sub-theme number.  
Example: KIM\_CIRIEC\_6.

## List of topics

### **1. SSE statistics, reporting and social impact measurements**

The SSE enjoys growing institutional recognition on an international scale, marked in particular by the positions taken by major international institutions to highlight the importance of SSE organizations and to provide a consensual definition based on the various existing legal frameworks and conceptions (ILO, 2022). This essential institutional recognition must go hand in hand with better statistical knowledge of the SSE. Having complete and accurate figures on the SSE is crucial to its understanding and recognition. Considerable progress has been made over the past two decades. However, this progress has been unevenly distributed across national contexts, and significant grey areas remain.

However consensual it may be, the definition of the SSE proposed by the ILO refers to perimeters that vary according to national contexts, and statistical methodologies that are also highly diversified, combining the collection of data from administrative documents and data gathered from unsystematic surveys based largely on declarations. SSE statistics therefore depend on an “agreement” defining their conventional nature and mutual recognition, as well as on the resources provided by national statistical offices. The guidelines for measuring informality also need to be examined with a view to their implementation in SSE measurement.

Salaried employment is often seen as the main variable used to measure the weight and distribution of the SSE, but this is not always based on sufficiently solid sources to propose a measurement in FTE (full-time equivalent) that would enable inter-sectoral and international comparison. The measurement of volunteering is inherently complex, reflecting highly fragmented practices that are not always formalized and difficult to monetize, despite the political and economic will to propose a monetary equivalent to assess its contribution in relation to other SSE resources. This also raises the problem of measuring the number of members in SSE organizations, for which we lack clear guidelines.

In fact, a better quantitative understanding of the SSE still comes up against difficulties, some of which remain hard to overcome. For example, existing statistical frameworks and tools are often unable to properly apprehend the SSE, which implies a process of deconstruction and reconstruction, of decomposition and recomposition, in order to obtain sufficiently detailed and aggregated data. The categories used are still not sufficiently debated. All this requires significant resources and political commitment, which are not easy to implement, as shown by the very mixed results from Eurostat's initiative at the end of 2019 to encourage EU countries to build an SSE satellite account. In the absence of this work, it is in fact still difficult to measure precisely what the contribution of the SSE to GDP is, but also to make progress in the debate on new wealth indicators to take into account the specificity of SSE business models, both in the management of profits and in the purpose of activities. What can we expect from recent statistical exercises, notably those carried out in recent years in Europe (Portugal in particular) but also in other regions (Canada, Colombia, Mexico, etc.)?

Added to this uncertainty about the economic contribution of the SSE is the vagueness surrounding the measurement of its impact, a more encompassing notion that refers to all the transformations (positive or negative) generated by an organization's activities on people and their environment. When it comes to impact assessment and reporting, expectations are high, particularly on the part of public bodies and philanthropic funders. What is expected of these impact measurements and reporting exercises? Can we count on them to demonstrate the specific contribution of the SSE to the social, cultural and environmental issues facing society?

Or are they merely control mechanisms for allocating limited financial resources, notably by measuring avoided costs? Are we assessing what is important to SSE actors themselves? Can micro-exercises be integrated into a macro-level picture? For example, assessing the democratic impact of SSE or its role in reducing inequalities would be an interesting challenge, again requiring significant investment in the production of relevant (and agreed) data. How should we measure SSE's contribution to decent work and sustainable development, as well as other relevant indicators with reference to the International Labour Conference (ILC) resolution on decent work and SSE? What lessons can be drawn from SSE impact assessment reports to date? What dimensions of SSE should we focus on? How can we take into account the meso level to capture the effects of SSE on community development and the creation of sustainable, resilient ecosystems? Between narratives and randomized controlled trials, which approaches should be favored?

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## **2. SSE and the ecological and energy sectors**

The Just Transition is a strategic priority in the European Union, setting principles and approaches to ensure an equitable and sustainable economy while protecting those who might be affected by this process. This transition will significantly impact both the ecological sector and the energy sector, particularly through the shift towards renewable energy and green technologies. The ecological sector refers to industries, activities, and organizations directly involved in the management, protection, and restoration of the environment and ecosystems. The energy sector encompasses the broad industry involved in the production, distribution, and consumption of energy. The increased focus on restoration, sustainable practices, cleaner technologies, and energy efficiency presents challenges and opportunities for both sectors. The human dimension of these processes is also significant, affecting the workforce in many areas, such as wildlife conservation and environmental protection, renewable energy, fossil fuels, nuclear energy, environmental advocacy and education, green technologies, electricity distribution, energy services, and markets. Small communities, wider regions, and even entire countries will be impacted.

Given this framework and ongoing developments, social and solidarity organizations play a crucial role in advancing a Just Transition towards sustainable development by advocating for just policies, promoting fair and inclusive approaches, empowering communities, educating stakeholders, and supporting vulnerable groups. These groups include workers in the fossil fuel industries and sectors dependent on fossil fuels, communities reliant on these industries,

including associated support and service industries, low-income and vulnerable communities, and agricultural and forestry workers. The role of the SSE is to promote inclusive, community-driven solutions that prioritize social equity, economic democracy, and fair, sustainable development.

The aim of this section is to analyze how SSE is addressing the challenges of these sectors (regulation, financing, organization, etc.) and to identify future opportunities. Work may focus, for example, on how SSE strengthens communities and local ownership and the various levels of its deployment (organizational, inter-organizational, territorial and extra-territorial), promotes sustainable and ethical practices in the ecology and energy sectors even as certain tensions exist between technological, technical, social and organizational innovations. The conditions, modalities and strategies for scaling up SSE enterprises, whose deployment is sometimes rapid in certain ecological and energy sectors, could be addressed, as could the creation of inclusive jobs, which contributes to social equity and redistribution, strengthens the resilience of communities and local economies, and argues in favor of public policies and their reorientation.

### **3. SSE territorial ecosystems and transition**

The social and solidarity economy (SSE) addresses the socio-ecological transition in territories, contributing to a just transition by ensuring that negative impacts are limited, particularly on marginalized groups, and that the benefits of the transition are shared equitably. In the specific context of this call for papers, the SSE is seen as a meso-economic space that is strengthened by its cooperative processes, resulting in a transformative paradigm that articulates scales. Territorial SSE ecosystems could play an essential role in today's socio-ecological transition, creating valuable synergies as well as competitive emulation both between SSE components and with their partners, whether public or private, to create system effects (production, consumption, credit, finance, insurance, etc.) and finally to lead to transformative social innovation.

This theme will explore the relationship between SSE and local development, focusing on the role of SSE territorial ecosystems in advancing the current socio-ecological transition. We welcome research papers on (but not limited to) the following topics: the role that SSE territorial dynamics could play in the socio-ecological transition, effective collective actions and methods of ecosystemic regulation in various territories, or on the conditions and/or territorial regimes in which SSE ecosystems can shift the economic paradigm, contributing to the achievement and localization of sustainable development goals.

### **4. SSE identities, hybridizations and innovations**

Internationally, as well as in France, Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) organizations are characterized by a set of rules relating to the allocation of profits (limited lucrativeness), democratic governance (1 person - 1 vote) and activity (social or societal utility, co-production with users) (Vienney, 1994). These rules underpin the identity of the SSE, and constitute both its political project and its economic model, serving a broader ambition of social transformation.

These rules are embodied in practices which, over time, or as a result of the organization's growing size, or external pressures (legal environment, dominant standards or competition), or insufficient cooperative training, can weaken. This loss of meaning, or identity crisis, is

generally understood in terms of trivialization or isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), but can also be seen in terms of resistance and innovation.

The specificities of the SSE are also embodied in the principle of hybridization of resources borrowed from Polanyi (1983). This involves considering the various economic behaviors that are embodied in the market, redistribution and reciprocity, and constitute the resources of the SSE. The articulation of these different resources is both a marker of SSE identity and a destabilizing factor.

This hybridization can go beyond resources alone, and involve the coexistence of a plurality of institutional logics within the same organization, signalling the challenge for the organization to manage or accept the tensions that run through it - between a market logic and a citizen logic, for example - or even to mobilize these tensions to generate renewed responses to the issues of the day.

The identity of the SSE is therefore a powerful vector of innovation, more often organizational and social than technological, in the service of greater social justice, emancipation and a certain sobriety at the heart of the challenges of a just transition. So how can we move from innovative experimentation to dissemination, and how can the SSE identity help to pollinate the rest of the economy?

In this theme, proposals for articles, whether theoretical or applied, will explore the tensions between isomorphism and innovation, the weakening or renewal of cooperative identity and the tools and devices that support it, new forms of commitment and their effects on organizational configurations and cooperative identity, and the rethinking of work, including identity work, as inspiring perspectives and possible alternatives for a just transition.

## **5. Financing SSE and its organizations**

The question of financing the social and solidarity economy (SSE) and its organizations is twofold. On the one hand, in a world where the welfare state is giving way to the citizen state, we need to think about how to finance the social policies that the state “makes” SSE organizations carry out (public commissions, public service delegations). Experimenting with social and environmental policies - whether to combat unemployment, socio-economic and territorial inequalities, mitigate the impact of climate change, or provide access to sporting or cultural activities - requires funding that complements volunteer work, which is a source of societal added value. Associations and non-profit organizations, in particular, have to deal with calls for tender or competitive dialogue that take them away from the sole source of public operating or investment subsidies. On the other hand, financial innovation completes the hybridization of funding from the public and private non-profit sectors.

Indeed, since the early 1980s, two new financial universes have developed: solidarity finance and crowdfunding. With regard to solidarity finance, we need to distinguish between microfinance and solidarity savings, and take into account endowment funds, particularly in France, Europe and the United States. Microfinance is twofold: either it concerns professional or entrepreneurial microcredit, with microfinance players or street moneylenders, or even tontines; or it relates to social microcredit, with cooperative banks, ethical banks (Spanish model) and public credit and welfare institutions (public or private municipal credits, depending on the country in Europe); or it hosts solidarity finance, comprising community banks, social currencies, solidarity revolving funds and solidarity credit cooperatives (types very present in Latin America). Solidarity savings concern either investment passbooks for solidarity financing of the environment, housing, employment or international solidarity, or the solidarity micro-



savings passbook as part of social microfinance experiments involving social micro-credit and micro-savings co-contractors. There are numerous experiments underway around the world, suggesting that mutual enrichment is possible.

What are the financing models of the SSE and/or its organizations at country level? What are the hybridization practices observed in both cases? In what ways do they constitute financing alternatives or alterations? What model of financing for the SSE has been established or could be established through cooperation between international organizations on the basis of its recent institutional recognition? These are the first, non-exhaustive questions to which the contributions may provide some answers.

## 6. SSE networks and public policies

Since the beginning of the 21st century, a new generation of public policies aimed at promoting the social economy has emerged in many countries around the world. This second generation of policies is very different from the first generation of policies supporting cooperatives and other families of the social economy. The latter are essentially characterized by their conception of the social economy as a key field of action to achieve the objectives of social and ecological change and by the deployment of a new transformative vision of public policies, based on the deepening of the participation of civil society actors in the political process and the introduction of powerful innovations in the modus operandi of governments. Its main distinctive elements are (1) the adoption of a transversal perspective of the social economy, conceiving it as a unitary reality, going beyond the traditional sectoral vision of its families (cooperatives, third sector, etc.), (2) the adoption of a multipurpose perspective of the SSE, conceiving it as having multiple systemic functions, including its great potential to generate transformative social innovation and face the challenges of the socio-ecological transition. As a consequence of this perspective, social economy policies adopt an integrated intersectoral perspective (mainstreaming), (3) the establishment of public-SSE collaborations throughout the public policy process and (4) the deployment of new instruments to support the social economy, such as social economy ecosystems (Chaves & Gallego, 2020; Utting, 2022). This new generation of policies has, however, encountered multiple limits and obstacles that have affected both its own potential for deployment or reproduction over time, its capacity and effectiveness in achieving its objectives and, finally, the risks that it can generate for the social economy itself, such as the emergence of institutional isomorphism.

The work presented in this theme will focus on government support actions for the social economy. Theoretical and empirical work is invited to explore the variety of policies deployed around the world by local, regional, national and international governments. Particular attention will be paid to:

- Analyzing the contexts and factors of emergence of these policies: which networks of actors, which alliances and which forms of advocacy have developed and been the most effective? Which actors have supported these new policies and which have contested them and how?
- Analyzing the organic frameworks of public policies: What organizational changes within the administrations themselves have been necessary to facilitate this type of policy? What new forms of instruments and evaluation of these policies have been deployed and have been successful? What public-ESS partnerships have been implemented?

- Analyzing the limits of the scope and sustainability of these social economy policies: Have they resisted political changes? Has the SSE been able to meet the expectations raised by these policies and, if so, what were the limiting factors? Have they generated tensions and irreversible changes in the social economy sector itself? Have these policies achieved the main objectives and expectations they set for themselves?

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## **7. SSE, education & civic rights**

Transitions to new paradigms of thought and action necessarily involve education and citizenship. Historically, education has been an integral part of the SSE, for example through workers' libraries and popular universities, to develop critical thinking, initiative and civic commitment. It has developed through school cooperation, popular education and theoretical and practical training in cooperation. And even today, it is recognized as a pillar of the associative and cooperative movement, and is being renewed, as illustrated by the example of youth service cooperatives. The stakes are different: while the main one is emancipation, it's also a question of transmission and renewal of members, structures and projects, and even dissemination to society as a whole. While this education is aimed at different audiences (members, employees, but also all stakeholders, including public authorities and the general public), actions aimed at young people are of particular interest to us. These take a variety of forms: awareness-raising, publicity campaigns, integration into school curricula, youth cooperatives in industrialized countries, access to education in developing countries, and so on. They often combine entrepreneurship and popular education, with a focus on experiential learning.

Discussions will focus on, but not be limited to, the following questions:

How do these initiatives for education in and through the SSE differ from other forms of education driven by an entrepreneurial or public logic (national service, etc.)?

How do they contribute to social and, in particular, ecological transitions, which are imperative for young people?

What local dynamics are they part of, and what are their effects?

What is their scope, impact and spread? What business models can support them?

## 8. SSE, decent work and the informal economy

The social and solidarity economy (SSE) is at the heart of current debates on the promotion of decent employment, which is now one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG no. 8). The ILO identifies 4 pillars in its Decent Work Agenda (DWA): generalizing access to employment, applying and strengthening labor rights, extending social protection and guaranteeing social dialogue. By promoting “inclusiveness, sustainability and resilience” (ILO, 2022), SSE structures are seen by the ILO and other international organizations as major players in this transition to decent work, which encompasses production work for own use, salaried work, unpaid trainee work and volunteer work. Workers' cooperatives (agricultural, craft, etc.) are often taken as examples, in that they can, among other things, regularize employment by offering contracts, social security and ongoing training. Recent initiatives among self-employed workers (drivers, delivery drivers, etc.) testify to their desire to regain control over their work via the cooperative form, in a context where Big Tech is attempting to recreate forms of informality. Platform cooperativism” thus embodies resistance and is a vector of hope for workers who find themselves in these new gray zones of employment.

However, the transformative role played by the SSE is potentially fragile. Some entities have few resources and difficult access to financing or public contracts, which raises the question of their ability to maintain decent jobs in the long term. Statutes can also be misused, in some places, to serve profit-making purposes that blur the internal coherence of a sector that is sometimes poorly identified and not legally circumscribed. What's more, the role accorded to the SSE in promoting decent work, notably through social protection, is for some merely the umpteenth manifestation of states' disengagement. At a time when more and more national laws are being passed to promote decent work, these factors call for a closer look at how they translate into the real economy. Theoretical and empirical contributions are needed to better understand the links between SSE and decent work, and the conditions under which SSE can be a force for transforming access to and quality of employment worldwide.

## 9. SSE and the fight against poverty and the care economy

After the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, the economic system underpinning the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remains that of capitalism, perpetuating a growth paradigm that exacerbates social exclusion and poverty, at most mitigated by solutions based on charity and corporate social responsibility (greening the existing system) (Hitchman, 2023), which can draw on partnerships with the SSE in a restorative logic. In this context, social policy, instead of tackling the dysfunctions of the capitalist economy, has often contributed to guaranteeing the long-term conditions of capital accumulation (Yi, 2023), even if these hybridizations can sometimes carry a transformative logic.

To counteract these tendencies, the social and solidarity economy (SSE) advocates a paradigm shift from inequality to solidarity (Matthaei, 2018). Specifically, the SSE addresses the root causes of different dimensions of poverty (as lack of income, exclusion from primary welfare services and from the markets, and uneven relational contexts characterized by power imbalances (Dubois, 2016)) fostering democratic instances of predistribution and providing care to those in need. It is therefore not surprising that in the sector of caring activities and home support services the SSE occupies a leading position, providing a framework for new careers, and gathering, accompanying and supporting family caregivers that provide without

pay a major proportion of work (Jetté et al., 2023). For instance, and as people-centered, principle driven, member-owned businesses, cooperatives are emerging as an innovative type of care provider, particularly in the absence of viable public or other private options (ILO, 2024).

The call for papers obviously goes beyond the study of cooperatives, and research on other fighting poverty/providing care related entities in the social economy is more than welcome. For example, the SSE also has a role to play in partnership with public authorities in public health, local preventive medicine (e.g., medical centers) and social services linked to the health sector.

Specifically, this session welcomes contributions on the following instances: how the ESS contributes to emancipation of formal and informal caregivers and to the recognition of caring activities? What are the main partnership forms of organization for co-production of services with users, and how they contribute to territorializing the response to needs? How to foster a change from the implementation of repair to the implementation of prevention strategies?

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## **10. SSE and agri-food system**

The role of the social and solidarity economy (SSE) in the agri-food system is emerging as a crucial field of study in the context of the socio-ecological and digital transition, in addition to its contribution to territorial development and people's attachment to the land. In a world of increasingly pressing environmental and social challenges, it is essential to explore how SSE can contribute to the sustainability and resilience of agri-food systems.

Researchers, academics and practitioners are invited to submit papers that address the following question: what are the implications of SSE for socio-ecological transition and territorial development in the agri-food sector?

Researchers will analyze SSE models that promote sustainable practices in agri-food production, as well as their effects on carbon footprints and biodiversity. They will also examine the impact of digital technologies on strengthening production and distribution networks in the agri-food sector.

Public policies also have a crucial role to play. They can encourage the integration of the SSE into the agri-food system and its role in the transition to fairer, more sustainable economies, but they can also come up against resistance.

The implementation of the SSE in the agri-food context, particularly in vulnerable communities, is thus confronted with obstacles that will need to be analyzed, whether they concern the difficult transition from the informal to the formal economy, or at the other extreme, tendencies towards isomorphism under the pressure of agribusiness. Tensions can be observed not only with the processes of commodification, but also at the multiscale level, between internationalization and territorial anchorage.

### 11. Commons and cooperative public services

The pioneering work of Elinor Ostrom (1990) opened up a field of research on the commons, which has since expanded into the social and solidarity economy, whose frameworks and processes provide the means for collective action. The commons are thus conceived as resources, whether environmental, informational or social, to which rules of access or production are attached, as well as collective governance. While not all of the SSE falls within the scope of the commons, it does offer them a privileged terrain for experimentation, and an opportunity to question its socio-political and socio-economic models.

As the commons tend to extend to the whole of society, their relationship with the State is changing in nature, and becoming one of a partnership. Cooperative platforms have nurtured such an evolution with the idea of a “partner state” (Bauwens et al., 2019). Urban commons are driving a renewal of local public policy design (Juan, 2020, Celati, 2020). Finally, the social commons are also leading to this same rapprochement at both state and local government levels (Defalvard, 2023).

In the other direction, we can also observe an evolution that is renewing the map of relations between the State and the commons. Starting, for example, with the public services approach, which is leading us to envisage new modalities for their implementation through “cooperative public services” (Perroud, 2023). From the legal perspective, an approach is also being developed in terms of the scale of communality, breaking down the binary opposition of commons versus state to introduce more flexible arrangements (Rochfeld, 2021).

The aim of this theme is not only to examine the relationship between the commons and the SSE, but also to open up a wide forum for contributions and discussions on the new links between the commons and public power, in the service of an ecological, solidarity-based and democratic transition of territories.

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## 12. SSE and intersectionality

Today, intersectionality is one of the most popular theoretical approaches in feminist theory and gender studies. The term intersectionality can be traced back to Crenshaw, who in 1989 used the metaphor of highway interchanges to argue for an expansion of feminist theory and anti-racist politics by exploring the intersection of race and gender in the case of discriminatory practices against women of color in the United States. Crenshaw emphasized the overlap between individual identities such as race and gender, and criticized the focus on either dimension. Since then, academic debate on the dimensions of oppression has broadened to include other dimensions (e.g. sexuality, generation/age, health/disabilities, ethnicity, nationality, religion, education) and has become more aware of the cultural context in Europe and the global South. The debate has also become more interdisciplinary, extending to meso-level forms of co-production and macro-level policies (e.g. care, migration, community services, health) to reduce multidimensional inequalities.

SSE activities include social inclusion projects for socially marginalized populations, recognizing inequalities and seeking to overcome them through unity, solidarity, cooperation, democratic participation and recognition of each person's needs and conditions. The values and principles of the SSE seek to value each person in his or her individuality, with his or her specific characteristics (experience, knowledge, resources, etc.), valuing the diversity of contributions to the achievement of common goals and developing the power of action of individuals and groups.

Implicitly, this means setting aside socially constructed power relations based on prejudices that generate inequalities linked to social class, gender, ethnic origin, age, sexual preferences or other personal characteristics. Challenging these deeply rooted social constructions of individual and collective identity in relation to otherness is a major challenge.

In this context, this theme focuses on the roles, contributions and impact of SSE actors at all levels in reducing multidimensional social inequalities and the challenges they face as SSE enterprises and movements to be active promoters of the socio-ecological transition and well-being 'together'.

## 13. Other



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