

Simon Musial

From: Mary MacSweeney <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 23 January 2019 14:35
To: RSES
Cc: Greg Swift; Richard Shakespeare
Subject: Submission concerning the draft RSES
Attachments: EDO DCC Submission re EMRA RSES (Social Enterprise).pdf

Dear Jim/EMRA team,

See attached submission on the RSES document regarding the role of Social Enterprise.

If you have any questions please let me know.

Regards,

Mary Mac Sweeney

Senior Executive Officer/Deputy Head of Enterprise & Economic Development

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Re: Call for submissions regarding the Draft RSES

Actions / Policy regarding social enterprise development

Given the increasing importance, contribution and recognition in both international and national contexts of social enterprise, it is suggested that the RSES would: refer to; include a policy stance and / or include specific actions related to social enterprise in the EMRA regional area.

A National Social Enterprise Policy is currently being drafted by the Department of Rural and Community Development. Various other national policies acknowledge and / or include actions concerning social enterprise such as:

- Programme for Government 2011
- Action Plan for Jobs 2012
- Local Government Reform Act 2014
- Action Plan for Rural Development 2017
- Action Plan for Jobs 2018

In the context of Dublin City, both the Dublin City Development Plan and the Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 reference and include actions / policies on social enterprise development. In regard to Dublin City, an increasing array of supports have been developed by Dublin City Council, the Dublin City Social Enterprise Committee and various other stakeholders over the last 5 years to support the local social economy and help social enterprises start and grow. Supports include training, mentoring, promotion and the Dublin City Social Enterprise Awards.

Such supports could be developed by other Local Authorities in partnership with relevant stakeholders in the EMRA region. Supporting social enterprise development and the development of an EMRA regional social economy is conducive to the overall vision of the RSES: 'To create a sustainable and competitive region that supports the health and wellbeing of our people and places, from urban to

rural, with access to quality housing, travel and employment opportunities for all'. This is because social enterprises and the development of a regional social economy represent an innovative, proactive and sustainable means to help address socio-economic challenges and also contribute to various economic, community and policy benefits.

Further information is provided below on Social Enterprise, associated benefits and examples:

Social enterprises are defined as enterprises that: trade for a social/societal purpose; earn at least part of their income from trading activity; are separate from government; re-invest surplus to pursue the social objective (Forfás, 2013, p. 10). They assist with addressing social, economic and environmental challenges while fostering inclusive growth, shared prosperity, social inclusion, training and job creation often for marginalised people (OECD/EU, 2013). They operate in what is known as the Third sector or the social economy and seek to address challenges which the private sector may not see a viable or profitable opportunity in and in which the public sector may struggle to provide effective service delivery. They typically embrace and embed: collaboration, solidarity, pluralism and sustainability and lead to integrated economic and community development in their respective setting or concerning their social objective. An increasing body of literature and studies highlights how social enterprises contribute to:

- **Economic Benefits:** these include job creation, job retention and training often for marginalised people who are typically excluded from the labour market. This ultimately results in cost savings for government and dividends when individuals change from being dependent on welfare payments to earning an income and paying tax. Local Authority resources can be potentially diverted to alleviating other problems as more people previously unemployed / excluded people are employed or trained etc.
- **Community Benefits:** Social enterprises are typically citizen led initiatives which promote social responsibility and social inclusion. Being citizen led in local areas – they also embed design thinking approaches as they focus on end user needs and associated problems. Profits or surplus are reinvested in the social enterprises or into further addressing the respective social mission. They also often operate in disadvantaged areas where social issues are most acute and particularly difficult for Local Authorities to alleviate.
- **Policy Benefits:** As social enterprises are typically community and democratically led, they promote active citizenship, engagement and the inclusion of minority viewpoints. They also bring about innovative and end user focused service delivery such as education, training, inclusion services etc which align with services from local or national government.

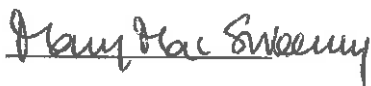
(OECD/EU, 2013) (OECD, 1999) (The World Bank, 2017) (Social Enterprise UK., 2015) (OECD/EU, 2017) (CIRIEC, 2012) (OECD, 2014)

Some examples below of social enterprises based in Dublin city highlight how they are and have the potential to further deliver: economic, community and policy benefits

- The Abhaile Project is a scheme for older homeowners to support them in the process of reconfiguring, retrofitting, future-proofing and renting out part of their homes. This social enterprise is developing an innovative new solution to help address the housing needs of an aging and often social excluded

population while also helping to address the need for housing - particularly one bed-roomed apartment rental capacity from the existing housing stock in mature urban areas. It targets older homeowners who are typically 60-75 years, on a low income, and live alone to reconfigure their family sized homes and create a new rental unit within their home. This will generate tax free retirement income for homeowners while providing housing supply and social inclusion.

- PACE is a not for profit community based organisation that has been providing training for prisoners and ex-prisoners for over 48 years. In order to provide real work experience and employment opportunities for their clients, it started a social enterprise programme. Their first social enterprise trains and employs ex-offenders to make planter boxes and garden furniture for residential community groups, in partnership with Dublin City Council. Their new social enterprise is called Mugshot. It involves a mobile coffee cart and barista training and employment opportunities for ex-offenders. Their long term goal is to have a range of mobile units at different locations offering more opportunities for ex-offenders in order to move them away from an offending lifestyle into mainstream employment.
- Third Space is a social business venture which was set up in 2011 to open and run eating and meeting places in regenerated areas of Dublin. Their mantra is that: there are living spaces, working spaces and a need for a 'third space' or community hub. Their first Third Space is a café and community hub in Smithfield which employs some marginalised people and acts as a centre for various community initiatives which often bring together socially excluded people.



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References:

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