

Resilient communities: local solutions for social and economic growth

EU Proximity and Social Economy Platform

27 June 2025, 10:00-12:00 CEST

Housekeeping rules

- This event will be recorded.
 - The camera and microphone are enabled for all participants.
 - Please open your camera to make the event more interactive.
 - Use the chat to ask questions and then raise your hand if you would like to speak.
 - To share this event with your network, use our **Trello board available by scanning the QR code.**
- Remember to use the hashtag **#ProximityPlatform!**



Agenda

10:00-10:05	Welcome and brief opening remarks
10:05-10:15	Setting the scene: Cultivating Resilient Communities through Proximity and Social Economies, presented by Francesca Squillante , EY Belgium
10:15-11:00	<p>INSPIRE panel session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suzanne Pergal, Cities and tourism activation officer, Métropole du Grand Paris• Ilias Filandros, Development Consultant of Menalon Social Enterprise, Case study on the Peloponnese Trails
11:00-11:45	CONNECT breakout session facilitated by Ambassadors of the EU Proximity and Social Economy Platform
11:45- 12:00	Summary of breakout rooms and concluding remarks

Setting the scene: Cultivating Resilient Communities through Proximity and Social Economies

With EY



Cultivating resilient communities through proximity and social economies

- The proximity and social economy have become part of an established narrative about environmental sustainability and territorial development
- Two relevant studies conducted for the European Commission:
 - **Scoping the socio-economic performance of the EU proximity economy** (led by EY, available [here](#))
 - **Benchmarking the socio-economic performance of the EU social economy** (led by EURICSE, available [here](#))
- The economic paradigm offered by the proximity and social economies is essential to create resilient communities



Operational definition of the proximity economy

The proximity economy is a human-centric ecosystem which consists of the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services within short value chains, enabled by, and based on locally rooted social interactions within a geographical area of perceived closeness.

It is driven by the collective intention of the actors within the ecosystem to increase the liveability, sustainability and resilience of the area.

Understanding the social economy in a proximity context



People-centered: encourage a type of economic development aimed at satisfying people's needs more than increasing the value of capital



Strong local dimension and context specificity:

- Local cooperation between variety of stakeholders as a means of organisation and in the implementation of place-based solutions
- Creatively shaped by the organisational and legal forms of grassroots organisations, in line with characteristics and traditions of the local legal systems



Active in a variety of sectors, e.g.:

- Agri-food, e.g., agricultural cooperatives and networks of small producers
- Tourism, e.g., innovative tourism services in remote and sparsely populated areas and innovative work integration pathways
- Retail, e.g., small local cooperative retail shops

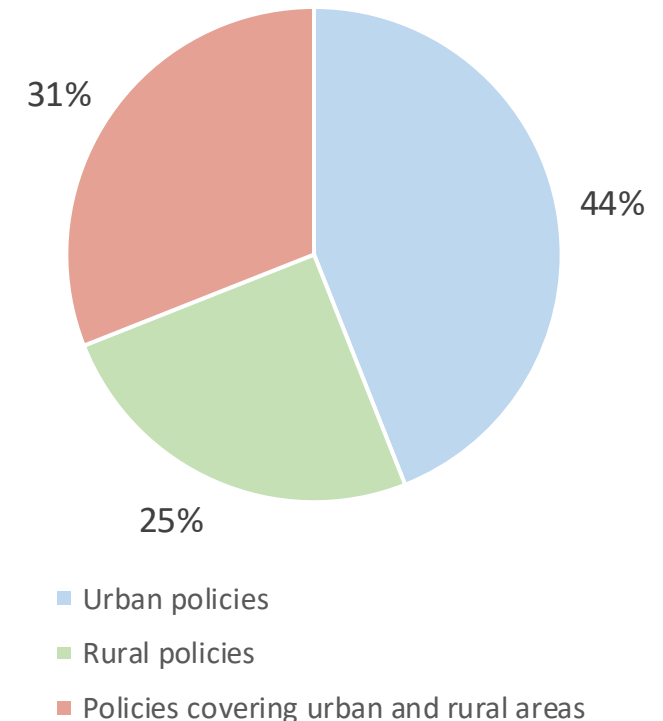
Understanding the social economy in a proximity context

- **Proximity-approaches and social economy approaches reinforce each other, and the local territory:**
 - Different dimensions of proximity can help social economy organisations to thrive
 - Social economy organisations can act with the dual aim of personal and territorial development, and therefore also as a driver for local growth
- Both studies shed light on **the relevance of the proximity and social economies during crises:**
 - Central role in addressing global challenges, including climate change, supply chain disruptions, but also ageing and the increase in inequality.
 - Emphasis on the importance of innovating governance frameworks for territorial development and rethinking economic and industrial development paradigms in line with a more proximity-based and socially innovative approach

Urban and rural proximity

- **Urban policies or initiatives**
 - Innovation, digitalisation, sustainability, economic development, and infrastructural projects
 - '15-minute city' concept
- **Rural policies or initiatives**
 - Rural development initiatives, most commonly economic in nature, with circular or innovative element
 - Community Led Local Development (Local Action Groups): multiple focus areas such as economic, social, and environmental
- **Examples covering both urban and rural settings**
 - National Smart Specialisation Strategies, e.g., Wallonia's Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3) 2021-2027
 - Cities' plans, e.g., the Hague's Resilient Strategy, with different scales of action, from people, to neighbourhoods, to the city, to the region
 - Bottom-up initiatives, e.g., Mobilieji ūkininkų turgeliai is a mobile farmer market operating in various cities of Lithuania and serving different city districts on different days

Distribution of proximity-based policies mapped in the EU, by area



Proximity approaches and resilient communities

Competitiveness and value creation



Community-centric market development: creation of a market economy tailored to the needs and wants of the population



Unique entrepreneurial models: proximity-based entrepreneurial business models have a focus beyond monetary added value and show a new sensitivity linked to the themes of social impact of their activities



Efficiency gains: Efficiencies gained through shortening value chains and incorporating other locality-based savings, e.g., reduced transportation costs and enhanced trust within relational networks.

Proximity approaches and resilient communities

Social impact



Empowerment of Local Actors: By involving local stakeholders in decision-making processes, communities can ensure that diverse voices are heard, leading to more equitable outcomes.



Strengthening Social Networks: Proximity-based initiatives often lead to the creation of strong social networks, where individuals and organisations collaborate to address common challenges. These networks can enhance community resilience by providing support systems during crises.



Addressing Inequality: The focus on local solutions allows for targeted interventions that address context-specific issues, such as unemployment or access to services.

Proximity approaches and resilient communities

Innovation and differentiation



Local Entrepreneurship: Encouraging the establishment of local businesses that address community-specific challenges. These businesses often adopt innovative practices that create a distinct identity within the local market.



Collaborative Platforms: The rise of digital tools and platforms can enhance communication, streamline processes, and foster partnerships, leading to innovative approaches in service delivery and resource management.

Proximity approaches and resilient communities

Environmental impact



Sustainable Resource Management: Local production and consumption patterns minimise transportation needs, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. By sourcing materials and services locally, communities can create a more sustainable economy.



Biodiversity and Ecosystem Preservation: Proximity and social economies often prioritise the preservation of local ecosystems and biodiversity, e.g., promoting sustainable agriculture, responsible tourism, and conservation efforts.

Proximity approaches and resilient communities

Planning conditions



Integrated Policy Frameworks: Collaboration across various stakeholder types and levels of government is crucial.



Community Involvement in Planning: Engaging local residents in the planning process ensures that initiatives reflect the community's needs and aspirations. This participatory approach fosters trust and commitment, essential for the long-term success of projects.



Investment in Infrastructure: Adequate infrastructure is necessary to support community resilience.



Monitoring and Evaluation: Establishing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact of proximity-based initiatives can allow to learn from experiences, adapt strategies, and demonstrate the value of the PSE ecosystem.

INSPIRE session



INSPIRE session

Choose your favourite topic and break-out room!

Breakout room 1: Balanced and inclusive city centres



Suzanne Pergal

*Cities and tourism
activation officer,
Métropole du Grand
Paris*

Breakout room 2: Strategies for rural development and revitalisation



Ilias Filandros

*Development
Consultant, Menalon
Social Enterprise*

LIVELY DOWNTOWNS

SOCIAL ECONOMY FOR THRIVING
CITY CENTRES IN THE
GREATER PARIS METROPOLIS

Selected Projects

*presented by Suzanne Pergal
Cities and Tourism Activation Project Officer
Greater Paris Metropolis*

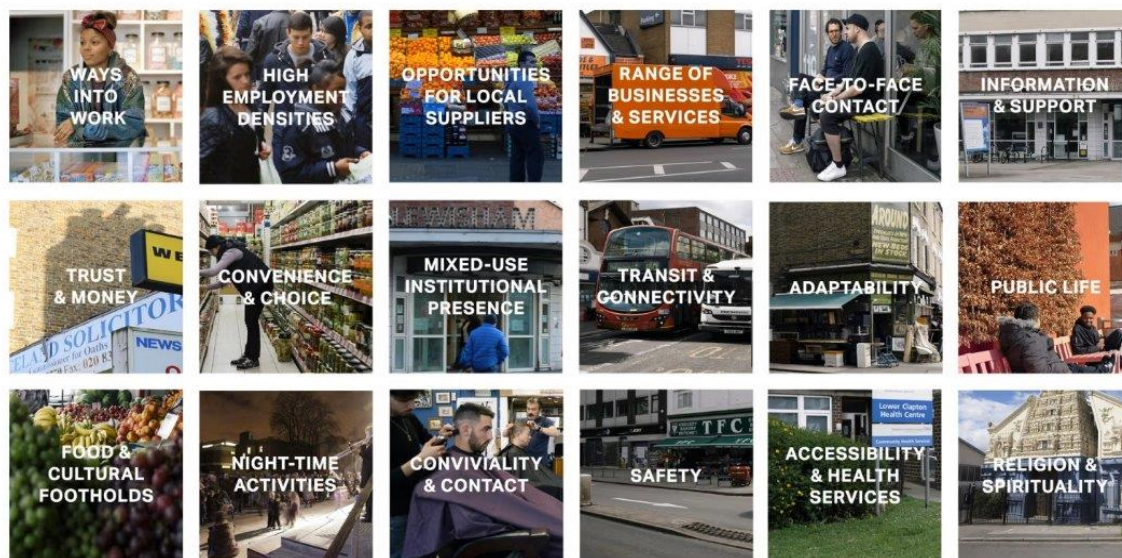


Training and solidarity boutique in Epinay-sur-Seine

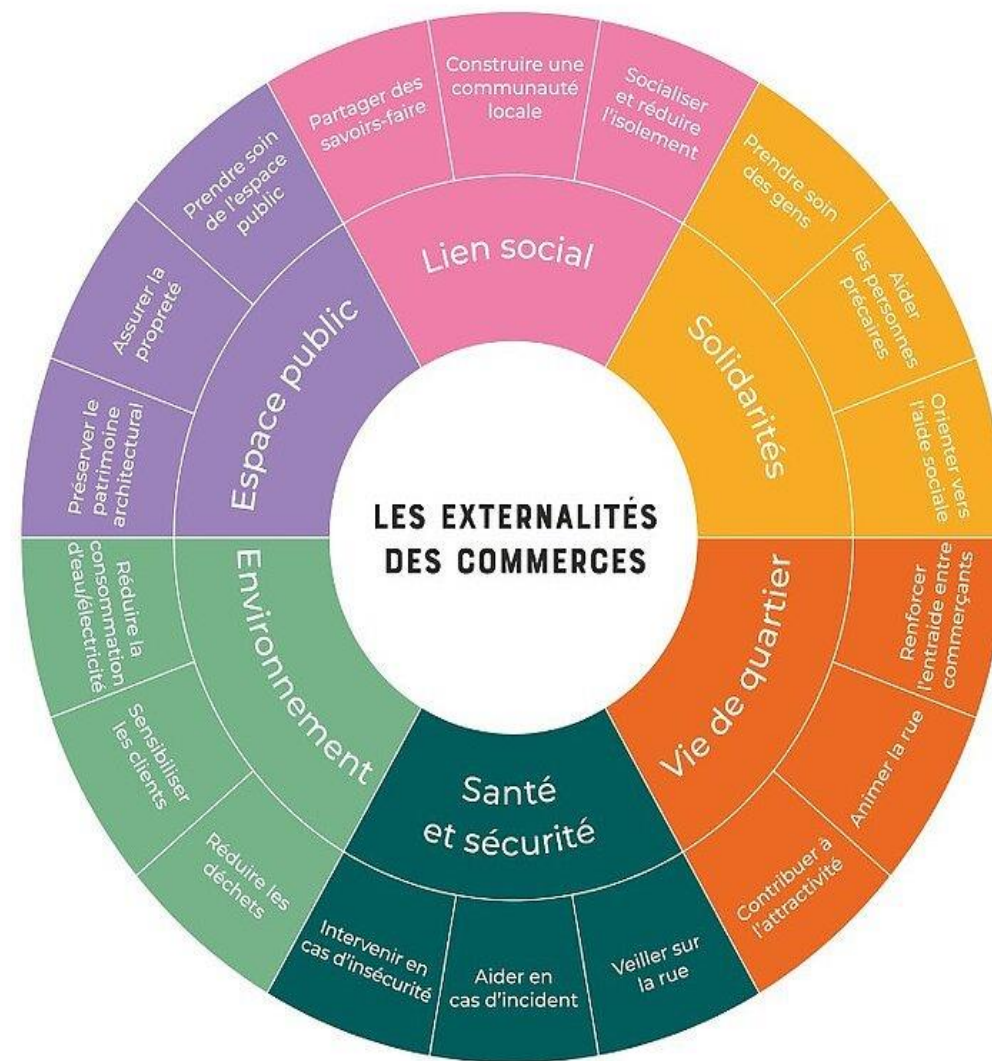
Why City Centers?

City centers are a concentration of a multitude of uses and social exchange

- For the Greater Paris Metropolis, city centers hold an enormous potential for the improvement of quality of life throughout its members cities.
- City centers are drivers of social connection, reinforced by economic activities linked to the social and solidarity economy.



High streets: drivers of social value © [We Made That](#)



Externalities of local businesses © [Paris Commerces](#)



GREATER PARIS METROPOLIS

Serving 7.2
million
inhabitants
and 130 cities



LIVELY DOWNTOWNS



City centre regeneration

The Lively Downtowns (Centres-villes vivants) programme supports metropolitan area municipalities in their town centre regeneration projects, with a view towards balance development.

- 84 municipalities supported, 102 contracts since 2018
- €32.2 million in subsidies for 450 actions

Lively Downtowns Public Real Estate Company

- Land for repurchase and transformation of business units with a target of €150 million investment

LIVELY DOWNTOWNS



Key Programme Objectives

- Lead and professionalize
- Observe and evaluate - Metropolis & Europe
- Support municipal revitalization projects: Lively city centers
- Promote commercial and artisanal diversity

Learn more: <https://www.metropolegrandparis.fr/fr/centres-villes-vivants>

URBACT

CITIES@HEART



A diverse ten-partner network

Cities@Heart brings together ten European urban areas with diverse profiles but with one common goal: achieving a balanced and inclusive city centre for all users.

By gathering relevant indicators and using a common methodology, Cities@Heart is here to develop a policy framework and tools that foster happy, healthy and harmonious places.

URBACT

CITIES@HEART

Cities@Heart

Towards a balanced city centre

Edited on 05/06/2025

Share

01/06/2023 → 31/12/2025

✓ Ongoing

Action Planning Network

Participative governance

Local economy

Urban renewal

Cities@Heart brings together ten European urban areas with diverse profiles but with one common goal: achieving a balanced and inclusive city centre for all users. By gathering relevant indicators and using a common methodology, this network aims to create a holistic policy framework for lasting and meaningful change in the heart of the city. Working hand in hand with local stakeholders and users, Cities@Heart is here to develop tools that foster happy, healthy and harmonious places.

<https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/cities-heart/>



Find us on the URBACT
website



<https://urbact.eu/networks/citiesheart>

VÉLOFCOURSES

SUCY-EN-BRIE



<https://www.ville-sucy.fr/velofcourses>



Cycle delivery downtown

- Launched in 2021 within the context of the pandemic
- Free service responds to the daily needs of inhabitants and employment needs of young people
- The City created the programme, was tasked with finding the premises, purchasing bicycles and trailers, and subscribing to an app to manage delivery flows.
- Emmaüs Val-de-Brie was tasked with recruiting deliverers and generating business. Emmaüs Val-de-Brie now manages the programme.



Objectives & Results

- Support local businesses and make it easier for residents to shop in the city
- Use "clean" mobility to limit greenhouse gas emissions
- Offer jobs to young people seeking employment or seasonal work
- 218 deliveries per month, 60 partner businesses, 1500 clients and 9650 km per year.

TRAINING *BOUTIQUE* **EPINAY-SUR- SEINE**

A hybrid space for entrepreneurs

- A restaurant, boutique and shop to find unique gifts with a special feature: it's a training shop for new entrepreneurs receiving economic aid through state programmes or wishing to test their concept before launching.
- The multi-partner initiative is supported by public actors such as the city and the Département.
- The shop and programme allow new entrepreneurs to gain business skills and test their ideas.



The [Boutique en Scène](#) storefront © Seine-Saint-Denis



Over 800 products for sale

Objectives & Results

- Since opening, the training boutique has worked with 34 beneficiaries.
- Future projects include the development of culinary professions and the enlargement of the shop's display area.

[Watch](#) this video and visit the boutique!

Resources for cities

Our Lively Downtowns Programme functions as a resource centre, providing info sheets, trainings and best practice guides.

We propose services to assist cities with developing a social and circular economy strategy for their city centers, supporting projects such as third spaces, artisan workshops or social and circular economy networks.

ILS L'ONT FAIT : L'ÎLE-SAINT-DENIS



Département : 93
Habitants : 8 664
Date de participation au programme CVV2 : 2023
Intitulé de l'action : Création d'un tiers-lieu avec les habitants



L'Île-Saint-Denis

L'annonce de la fermeture du dernier commerce alimentaire du quartier Maurice Thorez a mobilisé de concert les habitants et la municipalité. L'engagement de la ville pour l'économie sociale et solidaire, l'insertion et l'emploi, s'est combiné à la dynamique associative locale en faveur d'une alimentation durable et d'une écologie populaire. L'union de ces forces a abouti en 2022 à l'acquisition du fonds de commerce de ce local commercial de 550 m², propriété du bailleur Seine-Saint-Denis Habitat. L'objectif est d'y développer un lieu mêlant alimentation, économie et animation. Une association à gouvernance partagée a été créée afin de préfigurer ce lieu hybride, et une première concertation avec les habitants a permis d'identifier les grandes orientations du projet. Celui-ci accueillera une épicerie de quartier dédiée à l'insertion socio-professionnelle, une épicerie ouverte à tous avec un volet social ainsi qu'un café citoyen bénéficiant d'une cantine partagée.

Avec la Métropole, l'État, à travers la dotation "Politique de la ville", la DRIHL et le Département soutiennent le projet, dont l'inauguration est prévue pour le dernier trimestre 2025 à l'issue des travaux.

Couplé au programme Tiers-lieux métropolitain pour financer les aménagements intérieurs, Centre-Villes Vivants nous a permis de boucler le plan de financement de ce tiers-lieu très attendu par les habitants de notre île. Outre le financement apporté, le suivi et l'adaptabilité de la Métropole sur ce projet hybride ont été décisifs.

Mohamed Gnabaly, Maire de L'Île-Saint-Denis

EN CHIFFRES

700 000 €

C'est le montant des travaux engagés par la Ville pour réhabiliter le local commercial

EN SAVOIR PLUS

sur le programme Tiers-lieux de la Métropole :





FICHE MÉTHODOLOGIQUE

INTRODUCTION À L'ÉCONOMIE SOCIALE ET SOLIDAIRE

1 - L'économie sociale et solidaire : principes fondamentaux

1. Constat et définition:

L'Économie Sociale et Solidaire (ESS) est définie dans la loi "Hamon" du 31 juillet 2014 comme un **mode d'entreprendre et de développement économique adapté à tous les domaines de l'activité humaine**, basé sur les trois principes suivants :

- **Un but poursuivi, autre que le seul partage des bénéfices**
- **Une gouvernance démocratique**
- **Une lucrativité limitée** : les bénéfices sont consacrés au maintien ou au développement de l'activité et les réserves obligatoires constituées ne peuvent pas être distribuées et sont impartageables

Le but de cette loi est de reconnaître l'ESS et de lui donner un cadre juridique et réglementaire fixe. Elle permet aussi d'identifier et d'en fédérer les acteurs.

2. Les 5 formes juridiques de l'ESS :



Associations

À but non lucratif et régies par la loi de 1901, elles rassemblent plusieurs personnes souhaitant réaliser un projet, défendre une cause ou partager une activité.



Sociétés coopératives

Groupe d'individus mettant en commun leurs ressources et leurs compétences à but économique, social ou éducatif.



Mutuelles

Organisation de personnes ayant développé des activités de solidarité et d'entraide auprès de leurs adhérents.



Fondations

Rassemblement de personnes physiques ou morales visant à affecter leurs biens, droits et ressources pour la réalisation d'une cause d'intérêt général et non lucratif.



Sociétés commerciales de l'ESS

Sociétés commerciales qui partagent les valeurs et les principes de l'ESS.



DÉVELOPPER UN TIERS-LIEU

VOS ENJEUX

— Vous souhaitez développer sur votre commune un lieu collaboratif, qui entraîne une nouvelle dynamique économique et sociale, favorisant les échanges territoriaux.

Best Practice Guides

Info sheets, training sessions and webinars

Catalogue of Services



3RD EUROPEAN FORUM ON CITY CENTER



Maison de la Chimie Paris,
Thursday 6th & Friday 7th November 2025

SAVE THE DATE!

[Sign up here!](#)



THANK YOU!

Questions?

suzanne.pergal@metropolegrandparis.fr
centresvillesvivants@metropolegrandparis.fr

Peloponnese Trails

Reweaving Resilience

through Proximity &

Social Economy

Ilias Filandros – MAINALON SCE

PELOPAS | PARNONAS | Region of Peloponnese



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑ
ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ



Πάρνωνας α.ε.
Αναπτυξιακός Οργανισμός Ο.Τ.Α.



Ενωση ΚΑΛΟ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ
ΠΕΛΟΠΑΣ

A 1,730km Trail of Rural Innovation



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑ
ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ



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Ενωση ΚΑΛΟ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ
ΠΕΛΟΠΑΣ



A Flagship Regional Policy for the Social Economy and Sustainable Territorial Development
In the Region of Peloponnese – 2025



Peloponnese Trails Vision & Strategy



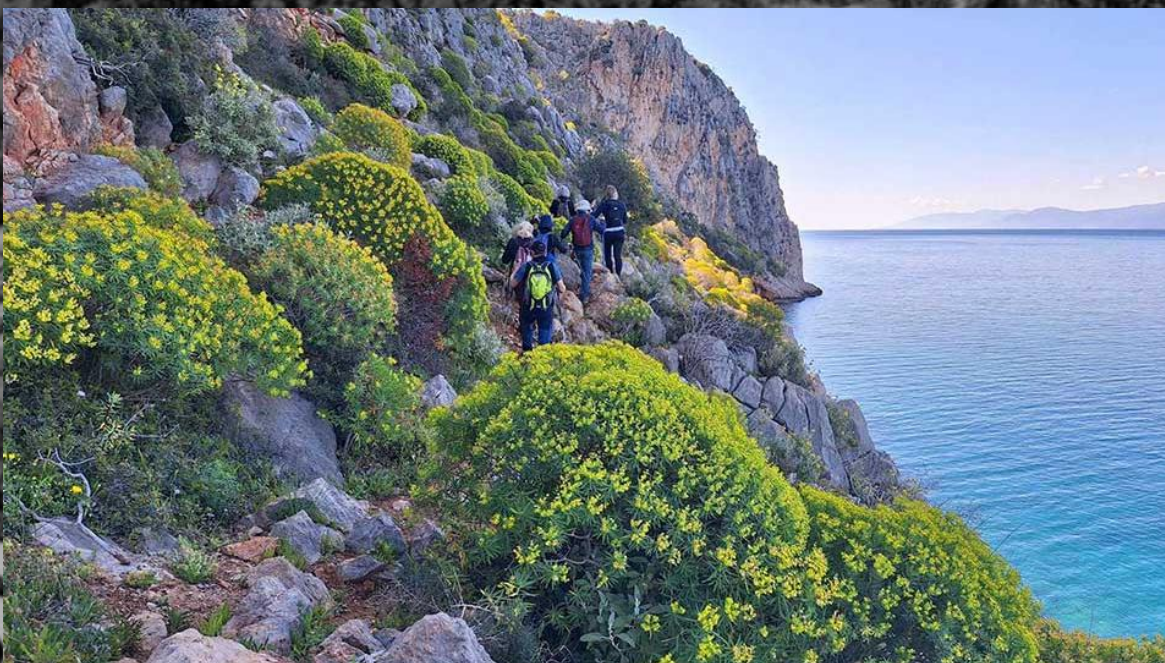
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Ενωση ΚΑΛΟ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ
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Peloponnese Trails is a pioneering **territorial action plan** placing the **Social Economy (SE)** at the heart of regional development. Designed as a **multi-dimensional rural regeneration strategy**, it combines certified hiking infrastructure, cooperative entrepreneurship, digital innovation, and green transition into a single system.

Launched in early 2025, the initiative aims to connect 1,730 km of rural trails across all 5 regional units of the Peloponnese. It is implemented through a **tripartite governance model** involving

- the **Region of Peloponnese**,
- the **Parnonas Development Agency**,
- and **PELOPAS**, the Regional Union of Social Enterprises (KOINSEP).





Strategic Framing

The Challenge: Rural depopulation, economic monocultures, fragmentation of planning

The Response: A multi-dimensional regional policy led by the Region of Peloponnese

Key Driver: Social Economy as an engine of territorial resilience and inclusion

Vision of the Initiative

Develop a 1,730 km certified trail network Position hiking infrastructure as the backbone of proximity economy

Activate SE actors (22+ KOINSEP) to maintain, manage, and deliver services

Combine green transition, digital mapping, and inclusive employment



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Peloponnese Trails Key Objectives



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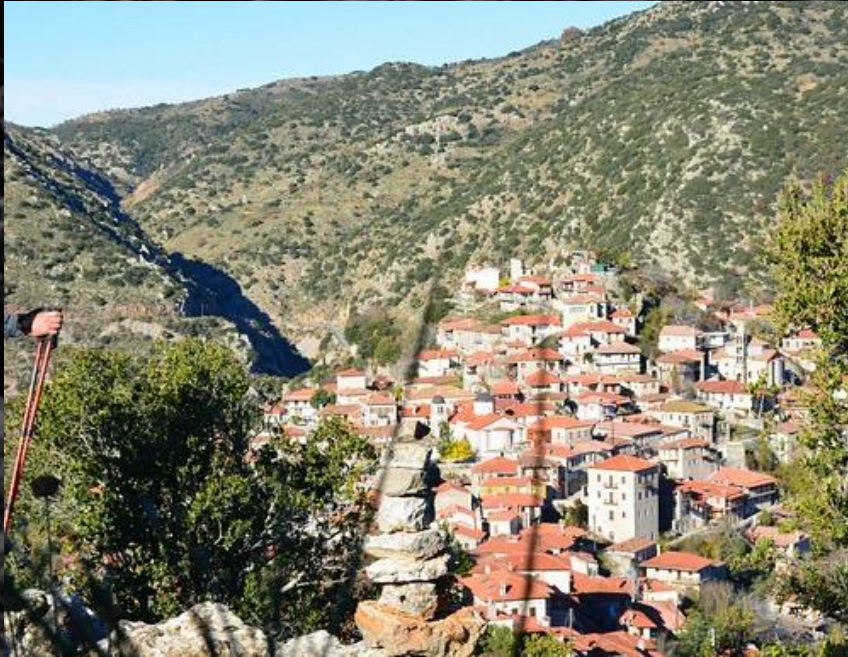
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Ενωση ΚΑΛΟ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ
ΠΕΛΟΠΑΣ



Create the largest certified trail network in Greece to support eco-tourism and heritage mobility
 Employ and empower **22+ Social Enterprises** for maintenance, signage, hosting, and services
 Use proximity-based planning to strengthen local value chains, jobs, and rural incomes
 Build inclusive governance involving cooperatives, municipalities, and communities
 Embed green infrastructure and digital cartography as permanent tools of planning and civic use



Generate income and employment for rural residents
 Restore ecological trails and access paths
 Integrate digital tools (mapping, tracking)
 Preserve cultural and natural heritage
 Foster sustainable tourism and green mobility





Peloponnese Trails Results to date



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1,200+ km (70%) of trails completed and physical maintenance (since Feb 2025)

Digital mapping database created via participatory cartography, recognized internationally

Over 100 residents trained or employed through SE structures

200+ villages linked by new or restored paths

Integrated environmental standards: low-impact materials, safe biodiversity zones





Peloponnese Trails

Innovation Inclusion & Integration



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
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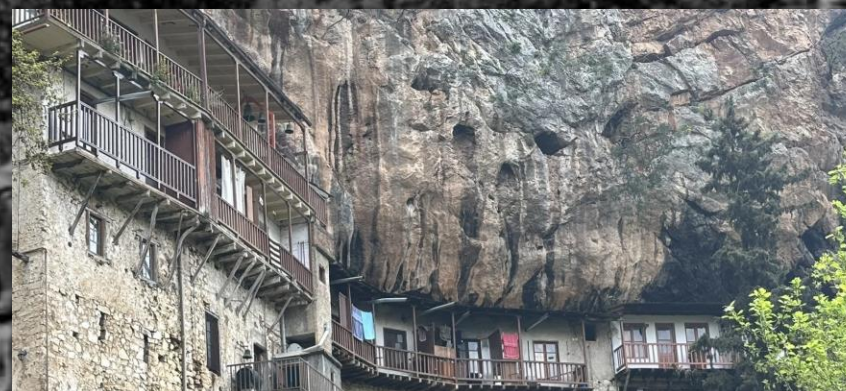


Ενωση ΚΑΛΟ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ
ΠΕΛΟΠΑΣ

Innovative approach: Combines rural trail infrastructure with SSE delivery, digital tools, and open-source mapping

Inclusive governance: Region, SE Union (PELOPAS), and development agency lead participatory, multi-level decision making

Environmental & social coherence: Trails foster sustainable mobility, community income, cultural identity, and climate adaptation simultaneously



Added Value

Physical infrastructure combined with SSE-based management

Real-time, participatory digital trail mapping

Flexible contracts and procurement support for SSE
Integration of local produce, services, and heritage storytelling



Peloponnese Trails Policy Significance



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ΠΕΛΟΠΑΣ



Peloponnese Trails is not a project — it is a **regional model of how SE can structure inclusive rural transition**. It addresses depopulation, circular economy, wellbeing, and ecological regeneration in one coherent framework.

It merits recognition as a best practice in:

SSE-based territorial development

Circular and proximity economies

Climate-responsive rural infrastructure

Participatory governance and procurement reform

Environmental and Social Synergy



Climate-resilient mobility model
Zero-mile economy via local sourcing
Eco-friendly signage, materials, and rest points
Income diversification & youth retention in mountainous areas



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Ενωση ΚΑΛΟ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ
ΠΕΛΟΠΑΣ

Governance in Practice



Role of PELOPAS as SSE Hub and interface with public administration

Continuous dialogue with Region and Development Agency

Horizontal coordination of local SSE actors

Structured feedback loops and digital reporting



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Ενωση ΚΑΛΟ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ
ΠΕΛΟΠΑΣ

EU Relevance & Transferability



Fully aligned with SEAP, CAP, Green Deal and Transition Pathway

Eligible under ESF+, LEADER, INTERREG

Shows how proximity economy becomes rural infrastructure

Replicable in other Mediterranean and cohesion regions



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Ενωση ΚΑΛΟ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ
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Future Outlook



Remaining 500 km to complete by Q4 2025

Launch of visitor platforms and trail-based economic circuits

Propose a trans-European SE Trail Network

Target new CAP and Just Transition funding opportunities



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ΠΕΛΟΠΑΣ

Thank you – Questions welcome

Peloponnese Trails = Infrastructure + Governance + Social Inclusion

A permanent strategy to transform not just trails, but territories

"Let's walk together into a future of rural wellbeing, social cooperation and climate resilience."



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑ
ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ



Πάρωνας α.ε.
Αναπτυξιακός Οργανισμός Ο.Τ.Α.



Ενωση ΚΑΛΟ ΠΕΛΟΠΟΝΝΗΣΟΥ
ΠΕΛΟΠΑΣ

CONNECT session



CONNECT breakout sessions



Balanced and inclusive city centres

Spotlight on: Greater Paris Metropole

*With **Suzanne Pergal**, Cities and tourism activation officer, Métropole du Grand Paris and EU PSE Platform Ambassador*



Strategies for rural development and revitalisation

Spotlight on: Peloponnese trails

*With **Konstantinos Papadakis**, Digital Rural Development and EU PSE Platform Ambassador*

Summary of the breakout sessions



Balanced and inclusive city centres

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Strategies for rural development and revitalisation

Spotlight on: Peloponnese trails

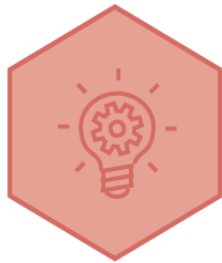
*With **Konstantinos Papadakis** from Digital Rural Development and EU PSE Platform Ambassador*

Closing remarks



Check out these upcoming events!

- 15-19/09: European Social Economy Week in Murcia
- 18/09: Open Conference "Implementing the Social Economy Action Plan" and Gala of the 3rd Edition of the European Social Economy Awards (More info and registrations soon)
- 8/10: Sedlex Final Conference in Brussels
- 21-22/10: ISTO Europe Forum in Brussels
- 29-31/10: Global Social and Solidarity Forum (GSSF) in Bordeaux
- 25/11: Diesis Digital Day in Brussels



The second annual event of the EU PSE Platform is coming soon! Join the platform to stay up to date on all upcoming events



Thank you for your attention!



Visit & join the platform at [EU Proximity and Social Economy Platform](#)



For questions or additional information, contact us at: helpdesk.pse@stakeholderplatform.eu



Visit the EU Tourism Platform

