

# STAKEHOLDERS MAPPING AND WORKPLAN/GUIDELINES ON EASI NATIONAL CONTACT POINT'S ROLE AND ENGAGEMENT

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## WP 7 - A7.1 STAKEHOLDERS MAPPING AND WORKPLAN/GUIDELINES ON EASI

### NATIONAL CONTACT POINT'S ROLE AND ENGAGEMENT

#### Introduction

The purpose of this Activity is to facilitate the active engagement of the social innovation stakeholders at national, regional and local level. In addition, it will work to coordinate the actions of established (or drafting the collaboration guidelines for potential) National Easi Contact points in order to feed in/link their work with the objectives of the Competence Centre. Stakeholders' mapping is considered a very important tool both for shaping the framework for the operation and development of NCCs and for national policies which aim to promote and support social Innovation. Timely mapping helps in communication, development of partnerships, identification and utilization of potential "actors", as well as the activation of those whose role is deemed critical in the entire process of the operation of the NCC. In other words, stakeholder mapping is the beginning of an effective communication plan between the project team and the project stakeholders.

#### Methodology

For reasons of coordination between the partners of the Activity 7.1, in July 2024 the Directorate of Social and Solidarity Economy of Greek Ministry of Social Cohesion and Family, which is the lead partner of the Activity, designed and sent on 2nd August to project partners a methodological note and a template in order to facilitate the whole process and the final deliverable of the Activity. Partners were invited to share questions, comments and suggestions on the template by August 28<sup>th</sup>. Those questions, comments and suggestions were discussed during an online meeting that was held on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

During that meeting clarifications were provided and partners agreed on the methodology that would be followed and the timeline of the Activity. Specifically, it was agreed that the first step of the mapping procedure would be the identification and recording of key stakeholders involved in social innovation. The model suggested, was that of the quadruple helix in which all the actors that interact in the development and promotion of social innovation are integrated. That means that partners would have to seek for stakeholders in the Academic and Research Community, the Private Sector, the Public Sector (National Authorities, Regional Authorities, Local Authorities, etc) and the Ecosystem of Social Economy and other entities of the Third Sector of Economy (e.g. Institutions, Foundations, Social Economy Enterprises, Mutuals, etc).

In each case, the partners should have in mind that in addition to the identity of the stakeholder (name of the Organization, activity, address, telephone number, mail, contact person, etc - in order to create a data base) the mapping table listing the stakeholders would be useful to include information on each stakeholder's activity, such as:

- how the stakeholder affects or is affected by the operation of the NCC,
- the expectations from the stakeholder (engagement objectives and desired outcomes),
- the stakeholders' capacity,

□ its motivation, etc.

For that reason both the Slovenian and Greek partners would add excel files (as examples of the mapping table) to the project’s shared drive.

The following table depicts how the relevant data would be collected and presented in each country<sup>1</sup>:

Name of the Stakeholder	Type of Stakeholder	Representative /contact person	REGION	e-mail	Mailling adress	Phone number	Type of innovation (business model /innovation product / process innovation)	Type/sector of social innovation	How the stakeholder is affected by / influences the NCC	Expectations from the Stakeholder	Capacity	Motivation	More information
	National Authorities												
	Local /Regional Authorities												
	Universities/ Research Institutes/ Technological institutes (Academia)												
	Social Economy Ecosystem and other entities of the Third Sector (Social Enterprises, Foundations, Associations, Cooperatives , etc.)												
	Private Sector												

At the same time (October-November 2024) a scoping research on relevant authorities regarding the current situation of the National EaSI Contact Points would be performed and meetings would be organized to draft guidelines to feed their work with the objectives of the Competence

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that for GDPR reasons the final tables with contact details and sensitive data of identified stakeholders will be kept in the archives of project partners.

Centre. All the results of the mapping procedure and the partners' contacts with the National EaSI Contact Points would be gathered at the beginning of December 2024 in order for the Greek partners to conduct the overall report of Activity 7.1.



## 1. MAPPING OF THE STAKEHOLDERS

### 1.1 GREECE

#### Introduction

The initial step in the mapping process in Greece was the identification and recording of the stakeholders involved.

#### Methodology

**1. Data organization:** The model that was followed was that of the aforementioned quadruple helix in which all actors that interact in the development and promotion of social innovation are integrated. The quadruple helix includes stakeholders from:

1. *The Research/Academic Community:* academic institutions, Universities and research centers, especially those related with social innovation (e.g. those with postgraduate programs or courses on social innovation),
2. *The private sector of economy:* conventional private sector enterprises,
3. *The Public Sector* (Public Authorities, Managing Authorities, Regional/Local Authorities, Local Government Organizations),
4. *The Ecosystem of Social Economy* (Unions of Social Enterprises, the Federation of Limited Liability Social Cooperatives, Observatories, Foundations, Associations, Cooperatives, etc.).

For practical reasons, the mapping was divided between the partners participating in the Greek scheme, according to the groups of shareholders included in the quadruple helix.

The final table listing the stakeholders in Greece (587 in total) includes information on the identity of each stakeholder (name of the stakeholder, activity, address, telephone number, mail, contact person, etc), the way the stakeholder can influence or be influenced by the operation of the NCC, the expectations from the stakeholder (engagement objectives and desired outcomes), the stakeholders' capacity, its motivation and the type or sector of social innovation.

The mapping was done through the agreed table and, on a next step, a grid where the correlation between power / influence and degree of interest was presented.

In particular, a stakeholders' matrix was created and divided into four quadrants. The y-axis measures the level of influence from low (bottom) to high (top). The x-axis measures interest level, low (left) to high (right).

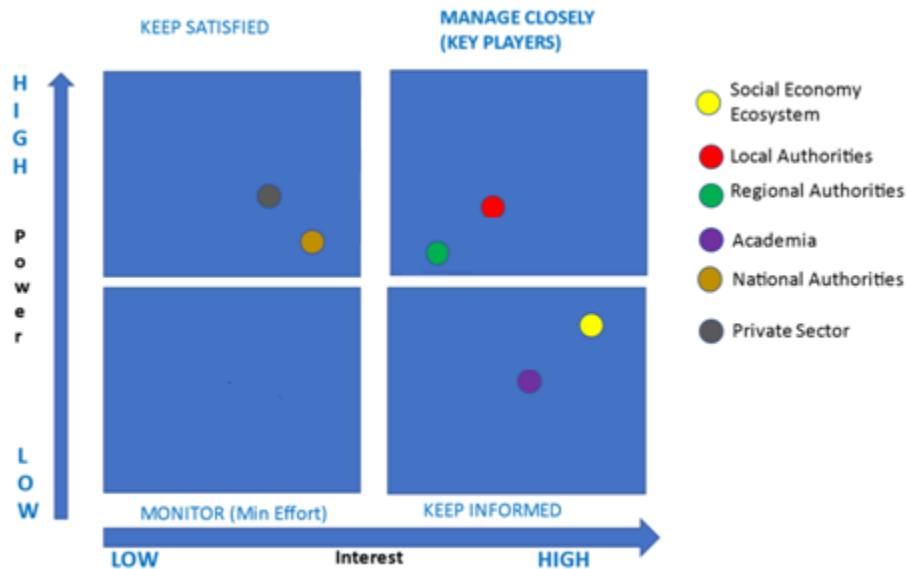
While creating the grid, questions such as the following were addressed:

- ⇒ Who are the most important stakeholders?
- ⇒ What is the maturity of each stakeholder in relation to Social Innovation?
- ⇒ Which stakeholders can contribute to the ecosystem?
- ⇒ Which stakeholders are most willing to adopt changes?
- ⇒ Which stakeholders can contribute to SEED2SCALE Project and NCC?



⇒ Which stakeholders are willing to contribute to the SEED2SCALE Project and NCC?

Answering the above questions and using the recording list, each stakeholder was placed in the corresponding quadrant of the matrix:



**2. Data sources:** For the identification of the potential stakeholders of the SI field, the Greek partners used the National Registry of Social and Solidarity Economy entities (Law 4430/2016) kept by the Directorate of Social and Solidarity Economy, the project's mapping that was concluded under SEED, as well as other SI projects or stakeholders (involved or necessary to be involved in SI) identified by desk research.

Additional information were retrieved through the following steps/ events which also helped in rising awareness raising on SI and the role of the forthcoming NCC :

A Technical Workshop on Social Innovation was held on October 17, 2024. It was organized by the Special Service for the Coordination of ESF actions (EYSEKT) in collaboration with the Directorate of Social and Solidarity Economy. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Managing Authorities (Ministry and Regions) and many involved Ministries.

The topics discussed:

- Introduction and presentation by the Greek authorities and DG EMPL (Unit G2) on Social Innovation (current situation, challenges and opportunities, what Greece aims to achieve in the period 2021-2027)
- Presentation of the Action "COMPETENCE CENTERS Modern Innovation Support Structures"
- Greek Socially Innovative Practices

In addition, a conference was organised by ANKA in Karditsa on October 18, 2024. The conference was about the cooperatives' development and among other things a session was dedicated to the NCC and the role of the 4 ecosystems of the quadruple helix in the development and diffusion of social innovation. The conference was attended by competent

Ministers and Secretary Generals of Ministries, the Regional Governor of Thessaly and Regional Development Agencies from all over Greece.

With the aim of informing and engaging further selected stakeholder-groups, the Directorate for Social and Solidarity Economy organized two online awareness raising meetings (November 28 and December 17, 2024) lasting three hours each and addressed to key social innovation stakeholders. The first meeting was attended by representatives of the Managing Authorities (central and regional level), as well as competent Deputy Regional Governors with a mandate on for Social and Solidarity Economy and Social Innovation issues. During the meeting, Mrs. Kontonassiou (Head of the Directorate for Social and Solidarity Economy of Ministry of Social Cohesion and Family and Coordinator of Activity 7.1), presented the main pillars of Greece's National Action Plan for Social and Solidarity Economy and Social Innovation, in an effort to inform and raise awareness of the issues concerning both social entrepreneurship and social innovation. The second meeting was mainly attended by representatives of Social and Solidarity Economy organizations and their Associations. During the workshop, among other things, the organizations were informed by the Managing Authorities' representatives and by Mrs. Kontonassiou about the possibility of finding resources both from co-financed programs and from other funding sources that they can use for social entrepreneurship and social innovation actions.

The above meetings were preceded by an online informational meeting held on July 11, 2024, which was attended by representatives of Local and Regional Authorities, as well as Social and Solidarity Economy entities. The topic of the three-hour meeting was the strengthening of Local SSE Ecosystems (opportunities-challenges-obstacles) and their contribution to Local Development. The purpose of the information session was to highlight the important role of the Social and Solidarity Economy at the local level and especially its contribution to local development and social cohesion and also to highlight the importance of continuous communication, interaction and cooperation between the Local and Regional Authorities, SSE entities and the local community. Within this framework, good practices of social entrepreneurship and cooperation between the various stakeholders at the local level were presented, several of which were pointed out by Mrs. Kontonassiou as examples of social innovation and how they can be exploited and scaled up.

In December 2024, the National Coordinator for Greece, Mr. Alexopoulos, met with the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece (KEDE). During the meeting, he informed KEDE about SEED2SCALE, its aims, objectives and priorities, as well as the important role that Municipalities can play in the development and dissemination of social innovation.

Finally, in the "Report on Social and Solidarity Economy 2023-2024", which was prepared by the Directorate of Social and Solidarity Economy of the Ministry of Social Cohesion and Family and was published online on the website of the Directorate in the begging of 2025, the basic principles and aims of social innovation, the SEED2SCALE program and what it aims at are presented in a separate section. In the same section, the main priorities of the NCC are presented as well as the connection of SEED2SCALE with the Greek National Action Plan for the Social and Solidarity Economy and Social Innovation, which includes three actions for Social Innovation that are expected to function auxiliary and supportive to the goal of the specific program.



Overall, the final mapping table covers geographically the entire country and is divided into groups of stakeholders: Unions of Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) Entities / other SSE Entities, Managing Authorities, Public Authorities, Regional Authorities, Local Authorities, Regional Development Agencies, Private sector of economy, Philanthropic Foundations and Academic institutions / Universities / Research Centers. The types of SI that the stakeholders are involved in or could be involved in are numerous, e.g. business innovation, process innovation, product innovation, social inclusion, environmental protection & sustainability, etc. and the territorial reference of SI range between national, regional and local.

The identified groups of stakeholders appear to influence the NCC (and/or be influenced by it) differently. Specifically, stakeholders such as Managing Authorities, Public Authorities, Regional Authorities, Local Authorities, Regional Development Agencies, Foundations, private sector and entities of the third sector appear to be able to offer funding/financing/co-financing, technical assistance and support, networking, supporting public policies, cooperation, etc. Stakeholders such as Unions of Federations of SSE Entities can offer networking opportunities, knowledge and support to the NCC and at the same time they can be supported (technically, in networking, etc) by the Centre. Moreover, stakeholders such as Managing Authorities, Public Authorities, Regional Authorities, Local Authorities, Regional Development Agencies, Foundations, private sector and many entities of the SSE appear to have strong capacity to support the NCC and SI in general. Thus, specific activities should be designed and promoted in order to motivate and engage them into this direction. Nevertheless, stakeholders such as Unions or Federations of SSE Entities appear to have low capacity in supporting the NCC but they do express strong motivation to support the development of the social innovation field and the creation of the NCC.

## 1.2 CROATIA

Croatia's report provides an in-depth mapping of national stakeholders in Croatia aligned with the quadruple helix model, integrating key stakeholders essential for the development and promotion of social innovation and NCC. The quadruple helix framework encompasses:

- 1. Research and Academic Community:** Universities and research institutes contribute to knowledge generation and education in social innovation. A notable initiative is the University of Zagreb's plan to establish a master's program in social innovation.
- 2. Public Sector:** This includes public authorities, managing authorities, development agencies, and local bodies that influence the regulatory and funding landscape.
- 3. The ecosystem of Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship:** Encompasses entities such as social enterprises, associations, foundations, cooperatives, and the private sector, including SMEs and limited liability companies.

Croatia's focus has been on mapping social economy entities and social enterprises. Although "social enterprise" is not defined under a legal form in Croatia, it is recognized within the third sector (e.g., associations, foundations, cooperatives) and through private companies with a social mission. Social innovation is predominantly understood in the context of the social



economy and corporate social responsibility (CSR), contributing significantly to achieving social and environmental goals.

Key findings include:

- **Public Authorities and Decision-Makers:** Mapping identified significant national and regional stakeholders essential in policy, funding, and regulatory frameworks.
- **Research Institutions and Universities:** Several institutions actively engage in social economy and innovation research or education (technological or social innovation), with promising developments such as the master's program at the University of Zagreb.
- **Support Organizations and Social Enterprises:** Numerous hubs and intermediate organizations act as incubators and accelerators for social innovation and social enterprises. SEs have embraced socially innovative solutions, particularly in processes and business models, to address societal challenges and advance sustainable development. The study assessed stakeholders' motivations and their necessity to engage with the National Competence Centre in Croatia. It revealed an untapped potential for collaboration and awareness building, especially since "social innovation" is not yet formally recognized at the national level among ministries and government entities. Our next steps involve direct engagement through conversations and interviews to enrich this stakeholder database and foster deeper collaboration.

## 1.3 ROMANIA

### Introduction

The purpose of Romania's report is to detail the methodology used to map key actors in the social innovation ecosystem in Romania. The process involved using multiple data sources and systematically organizing information to create a comprehensive picture of the current social innovation landscape.

### Methodology

1. **Data Organization** To map the stakeholders, four distinct categories of files (sheets) were created with the following structure:
  - a. **The Research/Academic Community:** Includes academic institutions such as universities and research centers (currently 5 stakeholders mapped).
  - b. **Enterprises (private sector of the economy):** Companies and other private entities involved (currently 61 stakeholders mapped).
  - c. **The Public Sector:** Public authorities, managing authorities, and local authorities open to social innovation (currently 21 stakeholders mapped)
  - d. **The Ecosystem of Social Economy and Third Sector Entities:** Includes social enterprises, foundations, associations, cooperatives, etc. (currently 199 stakeholders mapped)
2. **Data Sources Used** The following sources were used to populate each category:
  - e. **SEED 1 Mappings:** Two existing data sets (Seed T.1.1).



- f. Previous mapping done under **Consolid8 Horizon Europe project**.
- g. **Consolid8 Fest Invitations and Participants (2022 & 2023)**: These were curated to exclude actors irrelevant to social innovation.
- h. **List of Grant Administrators**: Administrators of grants in the social economy sector (PEO/PIDS).
- i. **SEED Invitations**: Contacts from the "National Advisory Board" list.
- j. **Additional Research**: Identifying other relevant organizations that were not previously included or were newly established.

### 3. Complementary Tools

k. **Online Questionnaire**: An additional tool to invite organizations to self-declare their participation in the mapping process. The results from this questionnaire were integrated until the date of this report (Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> 2024), but they will be continuously integrated over the following weeks as more results will come in.

#### Implementation

- Specific templates ("stakeholder mapping\_example") were used to organize and systematize the data.
- The mentioned sources were analyzed and progressively integrated into each of the four sheets.
- The information was verified for relevance and accuracy.

#### Conclusions and Next Steps

The next steps include:

1. Integrating data from the online questionnaire (the questionnaire is open until the beginning of 2025).
2. Periodically verifying and updating the mapping to reflect changes in the ecosystem.
3. Strengthening networks by organizing events and fostering strategic collaborations.

## 1.4 SLOVENIA

For the purposes of mapping the stakeholders of the national competence center for social innovation in Slovenia and co-creating the national social innovation strategy for social innovation, Center Noordung and other SEED2SCALE Slovenian partners have so far undertaken two activities:

- 1) Co-creation workshop
- 2) Online survey.

The report provides detailed information about the results of both activities. Both activities lean



on previous activities of two European funded projects – SEED and Consolid8 – in the scope of which Slovenian partners had already conducted an analysis of the Slovenian ecosystem of social innovation and its stakeholders.

## **Co-Creation Workshop**

On 13th of November 2024 Slovenia hosted a workshop in the premises of Center Noordung. 13 representatives from public and private sector gathered for 6 hours and executed 3 workshops – canvas business model; structure and governance; and gaps and challenges. The report serves as a strategic outline of the future structure and activities of the NCC for social innovation in Slovenia.

The report (in Slovenian with English executive summary) is an appendix 1 to Slovenia's report.

## **Online Survey**

Slovenian partners created an online survey for Slovenian stakeholders in social innovation and shared it throughout the social innovation ecosystem in Slovenia. They targeted academic institutions, national and local authorities, private companies and the third sector. They wanted to know about their needs and expectations from the NCC and their willingness to get involved in setting up the NCC for social innovation in Slovenia.

The response rate (cca 30 %) showed them that they need to improve their outreach activities, especially with the social enterprises and other representatives of the third sector. The spreadsheet with the responses of stakeholders is appendix 2 to this report.

Their next step is to organize an online workshop with respondents of the survey in order to get them involved in preparation of the national social innovation strategy.

## **1.5 ITALY**

### **Introduction**

Italy's report aims to outline the approach employed to map key stakeholders within Italy's social innovation ecosystem. The methodology relied on a structured process to give an overview of the current social innovation landscape and, with the goal of identifying the most representative stakeholders to engage in a co-creation process for the development of a National Strategy for Social Innovation.

### **Methodology**

#### **1 Data Organization**

Identification of the main stakeholder categories to be mapped, according to the Quadruple Helix principle and the beneficiaries of the Italian Competence Centre for Social Innovation:

- Public Administration: Public authorities, national and regional ESF+ Managing Authorities, Local Entities.
- Third Sector Organizations (Nonprofit sector)
- Academia
- Companies (For-profit sector)
- Civil Society



## 2. Data Sources

- Results from SEED 1 WP1 Ecosystem Mapping (T1.1; T1.2) updated through desk research activities.
- Participant list from the National Table of Social Economy, promoted by the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF).

### Next Steps

1. **Integrate data** from SEED 1 WP1 Ecosystem Mapping (T1.1; T1.2), updated with the participant list from the National Table of Social Economy (currently 10 participants, but the list is still open) and the national SI workshop held in Bologna (5–6 November).
2. **Define criteria** (such as level of influence, interest, and maturity in relation to social innovation) to create a stakeholder matrix to support and structure the engagement process.
3. **Develop a stakeholder matrix** to identify, on one hand, which stakeholders are willing to contribute to the NCC and, on the other hand, which are interested, thereby creating the conditions for their engagement in a co-creation process for the development of a National Social Innovation Strategy.
4. **Activate an engagement process** to foster strategic partnership and collaborations.

## 2. EASI NATIONAL CONTACT POINTS' ROLE AND ENGAGEMENT IN ORDER TO FEED IN/LINK THEIR WORK WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COMPETENCE CENTER

### 2.1 GREECE

Following communication and a series of contacts during the implementation of activity 7.1, it was found that within the framework of a European program,<sup>2</sup> the Special Management Service for the NSRF of the Ministry of Labor has assumed responsibility for the creation and operation of an EaSI Help Desk. The aim of the help desk is to maintain open lines of communication with interested parties, provide relevant information and answer questions from potential applicants. More specifically, the operation of this help desk began in early June 2025 and in the future this help desk will function as an information website for social innovation and the EaSI actions/programmes related to social innovation.

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<sup>2</sup> (continuation of the amendment of the EaSI GR 101053482 project - The Greek EaSI National Contact Point and the approved extension until 31.03.2026)



Furthermore, the Directorate of Social and Solidarity Economy held a joint meeting with the Greek MA for ESF+ (EYSEKT) and the Managing Authority of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security. The meeting was also attended by a representative of SED, which is a member of the Greek consortium of the SEED2SCALE project and is the leader of Activity 7.2. During the meeting, EYSEKT clarified that it temporarily serves as the National Contact Point for EaSI in Greece. In addition, the Managing Authority of the Ministry of Labor informed partners about the operation and the objectives of the help desk.

It was agreed by the participants in the meeting that regular meetings will follow with the aim of informing and collaborating with all parties involved in order to promote social innovation in Greece and to utilize all relevant EaSI actions and programs in this direction.

The view of the Social and Solidarity Economy Directorate is that the creation of an EaSI help desk cannot be considered to cover and serve the role that an EaSI NCP would play, i.e. providing information and relevant information material on actions funded by the EaSI program, such as: calls for proposals, European Commission announcements and news about the financial instrument, good practices and any other relevant information.

It is noted that several Member States have established links between the EaSI NCPs and the NCCs. Such synergies are more than useful given that many activities of the NCPs are directly linked to social innovation and social experimentation, which lie at the core of NCCs' activities.

The Greek NCC is committed to connect with the current EaSI Help Desk and to systematically cover the social innovation aspects of the EaSI strand into its activities. The NCC should also be in contact and cooperation with the EaSI Help Desk in order to inform potential applicants about funding opportunities for SI, contribute to the capacity building of stakeholders and disseminate the results. In addition, the involvement of the EaSI help desk as an associated partner in the NCC project is also considered.

## 2.2 CROATIA

In Croatia, there is currently no designated EaSI national contact point, which is an additional barrier to coherent implementation of EU-level social economy initiatives. While many other Member States benefit from a dedicated EaSI contact point that helps coordinate, promote, and integrate these programmes at national level, Croatian stakeholders often lack a centralized source of information and support in these terms.

To ensure Croatia's deliverables were aligned with national policy perspectives, Croatian partners proactively identified and engaged key stakeholders within the Ministry responsible for social affairs. Specifically, they included members of the Community of Practice on Social Innovation, the Community of Practice on Social Inclusion, as well as the national contact person for social economy and financial instruments. Draft versions of their stakeholder maps were shared with these actors and they received valuable input that helped them recognize additional relevant

stakeholders. This approach complemented their activities with the perspective of the national policy body and the European Social Fund Managing Authority, despite the absence of a formalized national contact point for EaSI program.

This experience demonstrates both the need and the potential for establishing an official national contact point for EaSI in Croatia, which would significantly improve coordination, knowledge exchange, and policy coherence for future social economy and social innovation initiatives.



## APPENDIX

### SLOVENIA: NCC-SI WORKSHOP SUMMARY

#### **Povzetek sestanka o ustanovitvi kompetenčnega centra za družbene inovacije**

#### ***Summary of the workshop on National competence center for social innovation***

*The summary<sup>3</sup> outlines the establishment of a National Competence Center (NCC) for social innovation, focusing on advanced technologies like AI, blockchain, and Web 5.0. Its mission is to drive sustainable solutions for societal challenges, fostering inclusivity, transparency, and collaboration.*

*Key elements include:*

- 1. Vision and Values: Emphasis on sustainability, inclusivity, ethical practices, and innovation.*
- 2. Organizational Structure: Divided into research, project support, training, communication, and financing departments, each contributing to the center's strategic goals.*
- 3. Technological Focus: Integration of Web 5.0 to bridge technology with human values, promoting personalized and ethical internet experiences.*
- 4. Activities and Partnerships: Support for idea development, funding acquisition, and project implementation. Collaboration with municipalities, businesses, NGOs, and educational institutions is highlighted.*
- 5. Community Engagement: Utilizing XR technologies for immersive education, public awareness campaigns, and fostering local connections through community managers.*
- 6. Impact Measurement: Development of KPIs and comprehensive reports to assess project success and societal contributions.*

*The NCC aims to address challenges like the digital divide and ecological sustainability through innovative approaches. It aspires to be a catalyst for change by connecting stakeholders, offering training and implementing socially impactful projects.*

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<sup>3</sup> The minutes of the Workshop (transcript of the meeting in Slovenian) are presented in a separate file as an Annex (file name: Slovenia\_NCC\_SI\_workshop\_summary.pdf)

