

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SOCIAL ECONOMY VALUES AND PRINCIPLES IN SPAIN. ANALYSIS REPORT



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“Social Economy shapes a better future for all with an enterprise model that meets the needs of our societies: employment, housing, energy, re-industrialisation, fisheries, cooperative and ethical banks, sustainable food or social exclusion, amongst other. While social economy creates and maintains quality jobs and corrects social and territorial inequalities, this business model is catalysing major transformation processes in Europe by means of competitive enterprises active in all economic sectors that are committed to sustainability, solidarity, and equality”

(Juan Antonio Pedreño Frutos, CEPES President)

“The Social Economy Action Plan bridges the gap between our social economy and the support it needs to thrive and contribute even more to our societies. From reducing the red tape faced by some social entrepreneurs to creating jobs and offering new opportunities for people to upskill and reskill, it is vital for bringing about fair green and digital transitions as well as an inclusive recovery from the pandemic.”

**(Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice President of the European Commission
for An Economy that Works for People)**

“Thanks to its strong local roots, the social economy can offer innovative bottom-up solutions to many of the global challenges of today, such as climate change, digitisation and social exclusion. The social economy works with and for local communities and has a huge job creating potential. With this Action Plan, I believe that social economy organisations will be empowered to scale up, be recognised, and make an even bigger impact on society”

(Nicolas Schmit, European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights)

““The social economy creates jobs and growth close to the needs of citizens and of their immediate surroundings. The COVID-19 crisis has also demonstrated the resilience and ingenuity of social economy business models. To continue developing their potential and their contribution to the green and digital transformations, we are launching a transition pathway for the “Proximity and Social Economy” ecosystem. We will work with all stakeholders for a more inclusive and sustainable economy.”

(Thierry Breton, European Commissioner for Internal Market)

INTRODUCTION

The last decade - specially in the past few years - has witnessed a growing recognition of the Social Economy as driver of sustainable development. Different national and international Resolutions, Action Plans, Recommendations and other strategies of economic planning encourage social economy as key player for societal transformation, in particular in terms of positive impact on decent work, social innovation or sustainable development at large. In December 2021, the European Commission adopted the Social Economy Action Plan (SEAP) under the title "Building an economy that works for people" (European Commission, 2021) with unanimous support from the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. The Recommendation on developing framework conditions for the social economy adopted during the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union (Second half 2023) brings further development and guides the implementation of the SEAP's measures in the EU Member States. This Recommendation puts the Action Plan into practice in each country (Council of Europe, 2023). Similarly, the Social Economy is included in EU end-to-end policies, such as the European Industrial Strategy of the European Commission (European Commission, November 2022), where Social Economy is one of the key 14 industrial ecosystems to increase European competitiveness in the world and strengthen its strategic autonomy.

More globally, the United Nations, OECD, ILO or the World Economic Forum are committed to the Social Economy. In June 2022 both the International Labour Organisation adopted a resolution concerning decent work and the social and solidarity economy (ILO, 2022) and the OECD approved a Recommendation to promote the Social Economy in the 38 most-developed economies across the world (OECD, 2022). Furthermore, the World Economic Forum- DAVOS Forum - published a report that advocates for unblocking the Social Economy as a path towards more inclusive and resilient societies (World Economic Forum, 2022). In 2023, The General Assembly of the United Nations laid down the cornerstone for a "global ecosystem" that favours this enterprise model, with a Resolution promoting the Social Economy as a key stakeholder for sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda (UN, 2023).

All these Resolutions and Recommendations undeniably reflect the central role that European and International organisations bestow upon the Social Economy enterprise model in coordination both with national Governments and local authorities through national, regional and local policies.

Despite increasing recognition, the Social Economy finds significant limitations to making its contribution to society visible. This is due to a shortfall in statistics that can suitably reflect its activity and to the fact that its contributions go beyond the economic sphere and fall within the concept of social wellbeing, which is a more complex issue to gauge and measure. Although

efforts to measure the impact of Social Economy have doubled in the past few years, progress has mostly been made in microeconomic terms, focussing on the individual analysis of institutions. Advances in regard to the contribution of the Social Economy as a whole are fewer and generally refer to specific types of entities or are based on qualitative analysis, with only few quantitative measurements. In fact, in the aforementioned initiatives, the international institutions state the imperative need to correct this weakness and to advance in official statistics that quantify the diverse business reality of the Social Economy.

In this context, the aim of this project is to raise awareness of Social Economy **and quantify its differential contribution to society as a whole** through more sustainable economic growth. That is, to carry out an impact analysis that allows for a better understanding of the effects that Social Economy principles have on society and arrive at an economic assessment thereof.

The analysis set out here follows a pioneering methodology devised in 2011 (Martínez et al. 2011, 2013) and extended in 2019 (Martínez et al. 2020), incorporating advances in the definition of Social economy, the methodology used and including key dimensions to study the impact of the Social Economy. This methodological development has significant backing in the scientific community and in policy assessment. It has been published as a work document by the United Nations (Castro et al., 2019) and the OECD as a best practice in the measurement of social impact (OECD, 2023).

In Spain, the Social Economy Act (Law 5/2011 of 29 March on Social Economy) defines the institutions that make up the Social Economy and their guiding principles. The latter are detailed as follows: *“These entities are governed by **guiding principles**, amongst which the following stand out: Primacy of the individual and of the social purpose over capital; to allocate the profits obtained from the economic activity according to the entity’s social purpose; promotion of solidarity internally and with society that favours commitment to local development, equal opportunities between men and women, social cohesion, the insertion of persons with the risk of social exclusion, the generation of stable and quality jobs and sustainability; and independence with regard to the public authorities.*

The **types of entities** that make up the Social Economy are co-operatives, mutual societies, associations and foundations engaged in an economic activity, worker-owned societies, insertion companies, special employment centres based on a social initiative, fishermen’s associations, agricultural transformation societies and special organisations created by specific rules that are governed by the principles set forth by the aforementioned law. According to the destination of the goods produced or services provided, social economy could be grouped into two subsectors: the market and the no market-oriented social economy enterprises¹ according to the final destination of their goods and services. The former so called the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy includes all the aforementioned enterprises and entities except for associations and foundations, which make up the non-market sub-sector of the Social Economy.

The **underlying thesis of this study** is that the principles shared by Social Economy enterprises, which can be summarised as the **primacy of people and social objective over capital**, give rise to a behaviour that is different than commercial companies² in regard to how their staff is composed, their working conditions, productive specialisation and geographical location. In turn, this different

1 Chaves, R y Monzón, J. (2018)

2 In the framework of this study, commercial companies are considered those whose main objective is generating profit.

behaviour contributes significantly to social and territorial cohesion and falls within the concept of social utility, going beyond the macroeconomic contribution assessed as such according to traditional variables

Thus, the starting thesis can be summarised into three key issues: do Social Economy enterprises and entities behave differently than commercial companies? If so, how does this different behaviour translate into benefits for society as a whole? And, finally, what is the monetary impact of these benefits?

Together with two precedent reports that came out in 2011 and 2019, this study is part of a project to measure the impact of the Social Economy that has evolved by improving on the methodology and extending the scope of analysis. Overall, the contributions of this project can be grouped into six areas:

- Firstly, the analysis has a global approach that considers all entities that make up the scope of analysis and, furthermore, includes a differentiation between the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy and the non-market sub-sector one. This allows to observe interesting similarities and differences between them.
- Secondly, the methodology developed in 2011 (Martínez et al. 2011 and 2013) and reviewed in 2019 (Martínez et al., 2020) sets up a theoretical framework that affords a systematic analysis of the heterogenous effects linked to the principles that govern the actions and behaviours of the Social Economy enterprises that contribute to greater social and territorial cohesion, defining their scope and affected groups of persons.
- Another pillar of this project is the use of a single statistical source, the Continuous Sample of Working Lives, which provides suitable variables and large samples, affording validity and representativeness to the results obtained by the analysis.
- The applied methodology to review and measure the different impacts of the Social Economy places this report among a group of impact assessments that use microdata, counterfactual analysis and quantitative techniques, which is one of the most comprehensive in this sphere. As such, the method implemented to measure and quantify these effects is based on large samples for both the Social Economy and the different control groups it establishes. From the initial sample of 732,082 employees and 228,138 enterprises that employ them, we have identified 10,291 Social Economy enterprises (of which 4,751 belongs to the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy) and 33,409 employees (of which 15,814 are in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy). Similarly-sized control groups (of commercial companies and their workers) were set up based on these sub-samples. The size of these sub-samples guarantees their representativeness and the strength of the analysis
- The existence of two reports, this one and the 2019 report, that use the same definition of Social Economy (based on the Spanish Law 5/2011 of 29 March on Social Economy) allows for an analysis of the evolution of the Social Economy in the period 2017-2021, which is a key moment as the economy was significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Finally, this project addresses the monetary assessment of a significant part of the empirically-found effects; that is, once these effects have been measured, steps are taken

to calculate their monetary value, adding a new dimension to raising awareness of the contribution of the Social Economy to society as a whole.

The report is structured into four chapters and this introduction. In order to set a framework for the results obtained, the first chapter analyses the productive fabric of the Social Economy in Spain, focussing on its development across territories and sectors, existing entrepreneurship and its evolution over the years. The second chapter ascertains and quantifies the potential effects linked to these enterprises along two axes: their contribution to social cohesion and their contribution to territorial cohesion. The third chapter measures the impact of most of the effects that were previously identified and measured for the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy enterprises, in terms of employment and monetary assessment. Finally, the report closes with a fifth chapter that, by way of conclusions, summarises the main results obtained.

CHAPTER I.

DEVELOPMENT AND SPECIALISATION OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

1. INTRODUCTION

As has been pointed out, one of the main difficulties to advance in the understanding of the Social Economy is the unsuitable representation of statistical sources and, in particular, economic information sources.

Statistical limitations are especially marked when the aim is to analyse the Social Economy productive fabric as a whole: there is information available for some types of entities such as associations and foundations or co-operatives, but no official data are available for other social economy enterprises. Thus, information regarding the key variables of some enterprises and entities (size, sector, location) is insufficient; more so, in regard their competitive position or business strategies.

A single statistical source has been chosen to carry out this social and economic impact analysis of Social Economy principles, which is the main aim of this project: with certain limitations, the Continuous Sample of Working Lives makes it possible to identify the workers of a set of Social Economy enterprises and entities and to obtain certain information about their characteristics. Though limited in the number of variables available, this information allows us to gain a comparative overview of the Social Economy productive fabric. However, the following observations must be considered in reading and interpreting the information presented in this chapter:

- a) The analysis is based on a sample of enterprises and entities that, as of 1 January 2022, employ one or more persons³. In this regard, it does not include enterprises that are

3. This is a limitation that is linked to the statistical source, as it only provides information about enterprises and institutions that employ waged workers

made up of self-employed workers. Although affecting both Social Economy enterprises and commercial companies, this restriction is very likely to affect Social Economy⁴ and, therefore, may entail an underestimation of its basic figures⁵.

- b) The sample used is made up of 160,376 private enterprises and institutions that are legal entities (excluding self-employed workers who are also employers⁶). Limiting the sample to the private sector and to enterprises that are legal entities allows for greater homogeneity in the comparison between Social Economy and other enterprises.
- c) An analysis of the relative importance of the Social Economy within the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector) is carried out below. Specifically, three groups of enterprises are distinguished, namely: (1) the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy, which includes co-operatives, worker-owned societies, special employment centres⁷, integration enterprises, mutual societies, fishermen's guilds, agricultural transformation societies, ONCE (Spanish National Organisation of the Blind) and Fundación ONCE (its foundation); (2) Social Economy enterprises, which adds associations and foundations to those included in the the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy; and (3) Total economy without the public sector, which refers to the whole of private enterprises without Social Economy ones (excluding homeowners' associations)⁸.

This chapter seeks to size up the Social Economy compared to the remaining economy and to understand its contribution to employment by regions and large sectors of activity, looking in depth at its relative development per regions and sectors and address its levels of entrepreneurship in some detail.

4 Social Economy enterprises usually bring together a greater proportion of members than partners of commercial companies and, therefore, the probability of hiring one or more waged workers is lower in Social Economy.

5 This possible underestimation would only take place in figures referring to enterprises or entities as variables regarding workers do include waged workers in the Social Economy.

6 In economic statistical sources, self-employed workers are considered as enterprises even if they carry out their activity as individuals without being part of a legal entity, regardless of whether or not they employ waged workers.

7 In the sphere of the Social Economy, only social-initiative Special Employment Centres are included. However, the statistical source used in this project (MCVL) does not distinguish between social-initiative and business initiative. Due to this methodological limitation, the results gathered in this report refer to Special Employment Centres as a whole.

8 This includes public limited companies and limited liability companies, partnerships, limited partnerships, joint ownerships, religious congregations and institutions, and temporary consortiums (known in Spanish as UTE).

2. WEIGHT AND RELEVANCE OF SOCIAL ECONOMY IN THE SPANISH BUSINESS SECTOR

Larger average size

In the Social Economy, medium-sized and large enterprises have greater relative weight.

An important characteristic of Social Economy enterprises and entities is their larger average size, which is clearly observed in their distribution by size ranges. And so, while in the total economy without the public sector, 42.5% of companies⁹ are micro-enterprises, this percentage drops to 33.8% in the Social Economy (34.4% in the market or business

sub-sector of the Social Economy). At the other end, the weight of medium-sized and large enterprises is higher in the Social Economy (both market oriented and as a whole) (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of enterprises and entities of the Social Economy and of the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector) by size ranges. Year 2021. Percentage of the total.

	Market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy	Total Social Economy	Total Economy (excluding public sector) (Legal entities)
Micro-enterprises (1 to 9 workers)	34,3%	33,8%	42,5%
Small enterprises (10 to 49 workers)	42,8%	41,8%	42,2%
Medium-sized enterprises (50 to 250 workers)	18,1%	19,9%	12,7%
Large enterprises (250 workers and over)	4,8%	4,8%	2,6%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

(*) Total Social Economy = market sub-sector of the Social Economy + non-market sub-sector of the Social Economy

Differences by regions

6.3% of private sector enterprises and entities nationwide belong to the Social Economy. In several regions, however, this percentage is close to or exceeds 9%.

As regards the number of enterprises and entities, the Social Economy is a significant economic reality in the Spanish business fabric: 6.3 of every 100 organisations in the private sector of the Spanish economy belong to the Social Economy (that is, are a Social Economy enterprise or entity) (Table 2). However, there are significant differences between the different regions.

In regions with low business density, the Social Economy is of greater importance. This is the case of Ceuta y Melilla and Extremadura, where the Social Economy reaches 10.6% and 9.5% of their respective economies, or of Castilla-La Mancha (8.4%). Development of the Social Economy

⁹ Please note that only companies with one or more waged employees are considered (not including self-employed workers or companies with no employees)

in other regions is more deeply linked to historical, cultural and institutional reasons. This is the case of Navarra (where it represents 9.8% of the productive fabric) or País Vasco (9.7%). In other regions, like Región de Murcia (8.6%), this development is more recent but has reached a significant proportion of the regional economy.

At the other end of the scale, the weight of Social Economy in the regional economies of Islas Baleares, Canarias and Comunidad de Madrid is quite reduced (amounting to less than 5% of the regional economy).

Table 2. Weight of the Social Economy in the productive fabric, broken down by regions. Year 2021. Percentage of all enterprises and enterprises.

	Total Social Economy	Total Economy (excluding public sector) (Legal entities)	Total
Andalucía	6,7%	93,3%	100,0%
Aragón	7,5%	92,5%	100,0%
Asturias, Principado de	7,0%	93,0%	100,0%
Balears, Illes	4,2%	95,8%	100,0%
Canarias	4,8%	95,2%	100,0%
Cantabria	6,4%	93,6%	100,0%
Castilla y León	7,9%	92,1%	100,0%
Castilla - La Mancha	8,4%	91,6%	100,0%
Cataluña	5,9%	94,1%	100,0%
Comunitat Valenciana	6,2%	93,8%	100,0%
Extremadura	9,5%	90,5%	100,0%
Galicia	5,6%	94,4%	100,0%
Madrid, Comunidad de	3,9%	96,1%	100,0%
Murcia, Región de	8,6%	91,4%	100,0%
Navarra, Comunidad Foral de	9,8%	90,2%	100,0%
País Vasco	8,7%	91,3%	100,0%
Rioja, La	7,5%	92,5%	100,0%
Ceuta y Melilla	10,6%	89,4%	100,0%
Total	6,3%	93,7%	100%

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Differences per sector of activity

Presence of the Social Economy increases up to 43.0% in care services, 35.2% in cultural services and 26% in education services.

The relative importance of the Social Economy in the productive fabric also varies widely according to sector of activity: the Social Economy is of great importance in some sectors whereas its presence is very reduced in others (Table 3).

As such, the weight of the Social Economy reaches 43.0% in the care sector and other social services, 35.2% in culture and leisure, and 26.0% in education. It is also significantly present in other sectors such as agriculture (12.8%) or the energy and water sector (amounting to 10.9%).

At the other end of the scale, its presence is very limited in construction (1.3%) and in the hospitality industry (1.3%).

Tabla 3. Peso de la Economía Social en el tejido productivo. Detalle por sectores de actividad. Año 2021. Porcentaje sobre el total de empresas y entidades.

	Total Social Economy	Total Economy (excluding public sector) (Legal entities)	Total
Agriculture	12,8%	87,2%	100%
Manufacturing industry	3,8%	96,2%	100%
Energy, water and waste management	10,9%	89,1%	100%
Construction	1,3%	98,7%	100%
Commerce and personal services	2,7%	97,3%	100%
Transport and mail	2,3%	97,7%	100%
Hospitality	1,3%	98,7%	100%
Information and communications	2,0%	98,0%	100%
Business services	4,9%	95,1%	100%
Education	26,0%	74,0%	100%
Healthcare	4,9%	95,1%	100%
Social services	43,0%	57,0%	100%
Artistic and leisure activities	35,2%	64,8%	100%
Other services	3,8%	96,2%	100%
Total	6,3%	93,7%	100%

Source: Continuous Sample of Professional Lives (2021) and own work.

3. LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY BY TERRITORIES AND SECTORS

The previous section presented the weight of the Social Economy in regional economies. This section focuses on an alternative reading of the territorial dimension: the distribution of the Social Economy by regions considering two complementary variables: the number of entities and the number of workers (both self-employed and waged employees).

More than half of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy nationwide (specifically, 53% of enterprises and 58.5% of employment) is located in four regions. Thus, Andalucía represents 20.6% of all market-oriented Social Economy enterprises and 23.3% of employment; Cataluña, 13.3% of enterprises and 13.2% of employment; Comunidad Valenciana, 10.5% of enterprises and 15.3% of employment; and Comunidad de Madrid, 7.2% of enterprises and 9.1% of employment. Región de Murcia and País Vasco also have significant weight in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy (6.9% and 7.0% of all entities, respectively) (Table 4).

Results for the Social Economy as a whole are not very different to those found for the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy, with higher relative weight in Comunidad de Madrid and Cataluña, and lower in Región de Murcia and Andalucía.

Table 4. Distribution of the Social Economy per regions. Year 2021.

	Number of entities			Number of workers (self-employed and waged workers)		
	Market-oriented social economy	Total social economy	Total economy (excluding public sector)	Market-oriented social economy	Total social economy	Total economy (excluding public sector)
Andalucía	20,6%	16,0%	14,9%	23,3%	17,6%	15,4%
Aragón	3,6%	3,6%	2,9%	2,9%	3,1%	2,8%
Asturias, Principado de	1,9%	1,9%	1,6%	1,6%	1,6%	1,9%
Balears, Illes	1,3%	1,7%	2,6%	1,0%	1,5%	2,3%
Canarias	3,0%	3,2%	4,2%	2,4%	2,8%	4,3%
Cantabria	0,9%	1,0%	1,0%	0,6%	0,8%	1,1%
Castilla y León	5,5%	5,4%	4,2%	4,1%	4,3%	4,5%
Castilla - La Mancha	6,7%	4,9%	3,5%	4,5%	3,6%	3,7%
Cataluña	13,3%	17,9%	18,9%	13,2%	20,0%	18,2%
Comunitat Valenciana	10,5%	11,1%	11,1%	15,3%	12,2%	10,5%
Extremadura	3,4%	2,5%	1,6%	2,1%	1,7%	1,6%
Galicia	4,7%	4,8%	5,4%	3,4%	4,0%	5,3%
Madrid, Comunidad de	7,2%	10,8%	17,7%	9,1%	11,9%	18,1%
Murcia, Región de	6,9%	4,7%	3,3%	6,4%	4,5%	3,1%
Navarra, Comunidad Foral de	2,6%	2,3%	1,4%	2,1%	2,1%	1,4%
País Vasco	7,0%	7,1%	4,9%	7,2%	7,3%	4,9%
Rioja, La	0,8%	0,8%	0,7%	0,6%	0,6%	0,7%
Ceuta y Melilla	0,3%	0,3%	0,2%	0,2%	0,3%	0,2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Level of development of the Social Economy by regions

The location of Social Economy employment by regions is determined by the size of the latter, with larger regions having larger employment figures. This is why developing a relative benchmark is necessary. This will allow us to understand the level of development of the Social Economy compared to the economy as a whole. To this end, a relative development benchmark¹⁰ has been applied to reflect the weight that a certain region has on Social Economy employment at a national level, related to the weight of private employment as a whole (excluding the public sector).

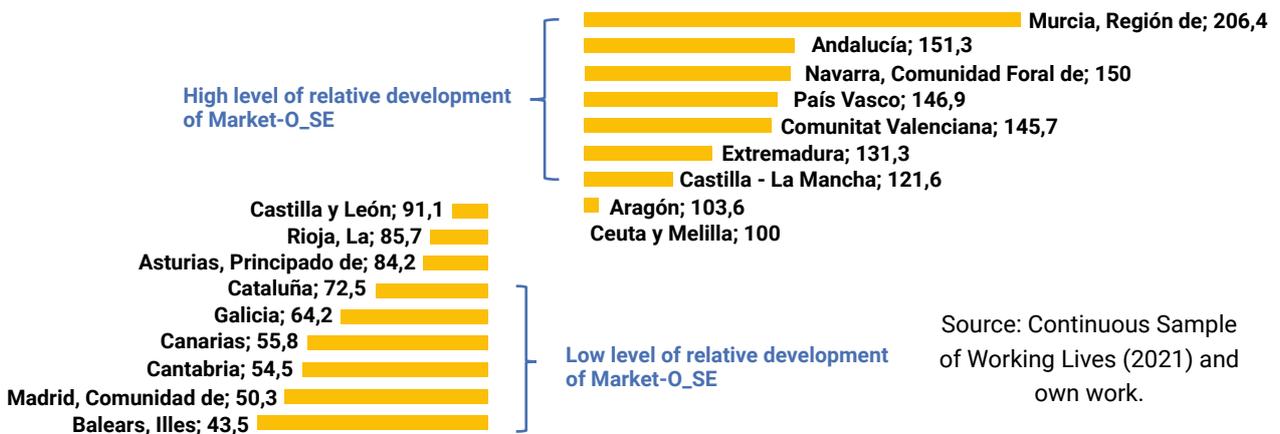
The level of development of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy is very different depending on the region. Región de Murcia, Andalucía, Navarra and País Vasco have the highest levels of relative development.

The results of this benchmark reflect the differences in the level of development of the Social Economy by regions. Thus, it can be pointed out that market-oriented Social Economy is clearly underdeveloped in Baleares, Comunidad de Madrid, Cantabria, Canarias, Galicia and Cataluña, since based on their benchmark value, the contribution of these regions to the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy employment at national level is significantly lower than their contribution to the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector), amounting to between 60% and 20% less. At the other end of the scale, the market or business sub-sector of the

Social Economy in certain regions has higher levels of relative development: Región de Murcia, Andalucía, Comunidad Valenciana, Navarra, País Vasco, Comunidad Valenciana, Extremadura and Castilla-La Mancha. The weight of Social Economy employment in these regions is much higher than the weight of the total economy nationwide (excluding the public sector), from twice as high in the case of Región de Murcia to 20% higher in the case of Castilla-La Mancha (Figure 1).

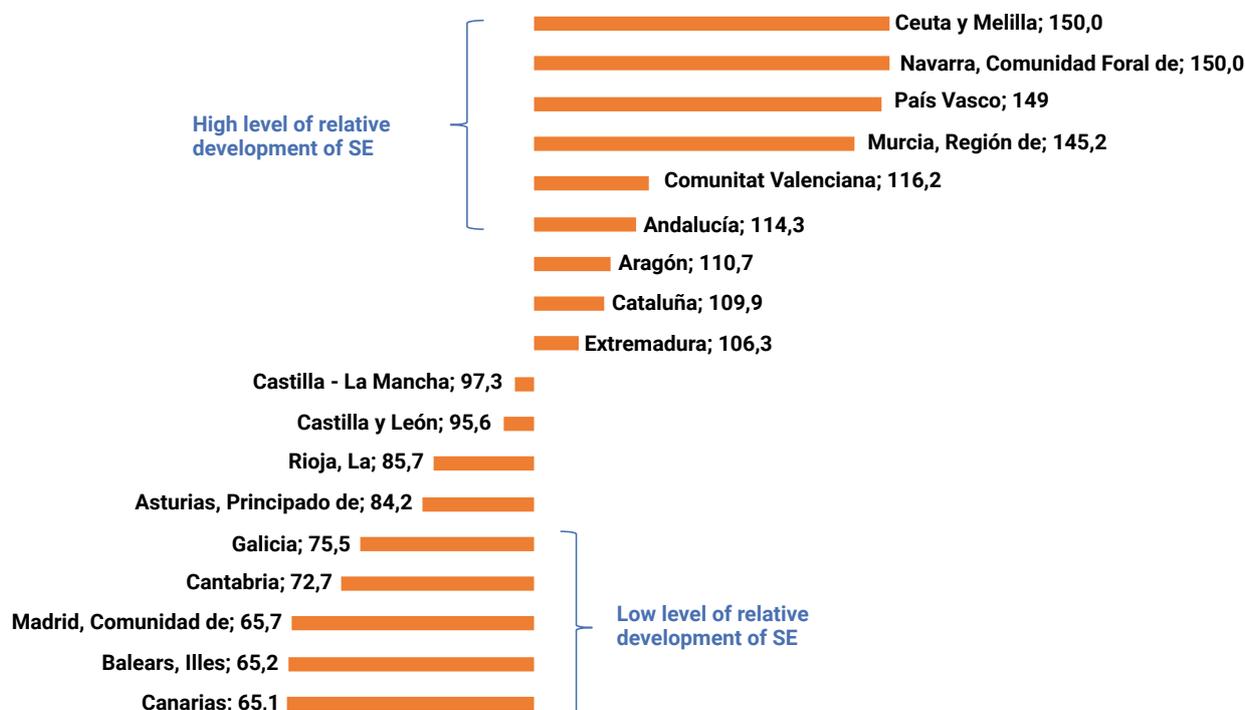
The results of the development benchmark for the Social Economy as a whole are slightly different than the results for the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy due to the larger or smaller relative presence of associations and foundations in each region. Overall, however, the regions where the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy has higher and lower levels of development are more or less the same (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Relative level of development of the market-oriented Social Economy (Market_O_SE) by region. Year 2021. Weight of each region in market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy employment compared to their weight in total employment (excluding the public sector). Participation of each region in total employment (excluding the public sector) = 100.



¹⁰ The relative development benchmark for Social Economy in a region i has been defined as the percentage of the national Social Economy employment (market or business sub-sector of the and total) in region i divided by the percentage of the employment of the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector) in region i. The benchmark has been expressed as an index number (weight in the total economy excluding the public sector = 100).

Figure 2. Relative level of development of the Social Economy (SE) by region. Year 2021. Weight of each region in Social Economy employment compared to their weight in total employment (excluding the public sector). Participation of each region in total employment (excluding the public sector) = 100.



Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Concentration of the Social Economy by sector of activity

Commerce, business services, care and other social services, and education bring together 68.3% of employment in the Social Economy and 42.7% in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy.

How the Social Economy is distributed per sectors of activity is also linked to how enterprises are distributed as a whole; that is, some of the larger sectors in the overall economy also bring together most of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy enterprises (Table 5). Thus, commerce and personal services amount to 17.9% of enterprises and 24.0% of employment in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy; also, business services (13.6% and 17.2%) and education (11.8% and 9.2%). Other sectors, such as industry or agriculture also have a very significant weight in the market-oriented Social Economy as a whole.

When associations and foundations are included, the care and other social services sector and the culture and leisure sector also become part of the group of sectors that are very significant to the Social Economy as a whole.

Table 5. Distribution of the Social Economy per sectors of activity. Year 2021.

	Number of entities			Number of workers (self-employed and waged workers)		
	Market or business sub-sector of the social economy	Total social economy	Total economy (excluding public sector)	Market or business sub-sector of the social economy	Total social economy	Total economy (excluding public sector)
Agriculture	17,2%	8,7%	3,9%	13,9%	7,4%	4,8%
Manufacturing industry	19,1%	9,0%	15,5%	12,1%	6,8%	13,4%
Energy, water and waste management	0,8%	1,4%	0,8%	0,4%	0,6%	1,1%
Construction	4,8%	2,3%	11,6%	2,5%	1,3%	8,3%
Commerce and personal services	17,9%	9,3%	22,8%	24,0%	12,9%	23,1%
Transport and mail	3,8%	1,9%	5,6%	3,2%	1,7%	6,0%
Hospitality	3,1%	2,2%	11,2%	2,3%	1,6%	9,3%
Information and communications	1,2%	1,0%	3,2%	0,8%	0,6%	4,1%
Business services	13,6%	11,7%	15,2%	17,2%	13,5%	18,3%
Education	11,8%	16,9%	3,2%	9,2%	17,4%	2,8%
Healthcare	1,1%	1,7%	2,3%	1,3%	3,8%	2,7%
Social services	4,2%	17,7%	1,6%	12,4%	24,5%	1,8%
Culture and leisure	0,8%	15,5%	1,9%	0,5%	7,5%	1,6%
Other services	0,5%	0,7%	1,3%	0,3%	0,3%	2,8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work..

Productive specialisation of the Social Economy

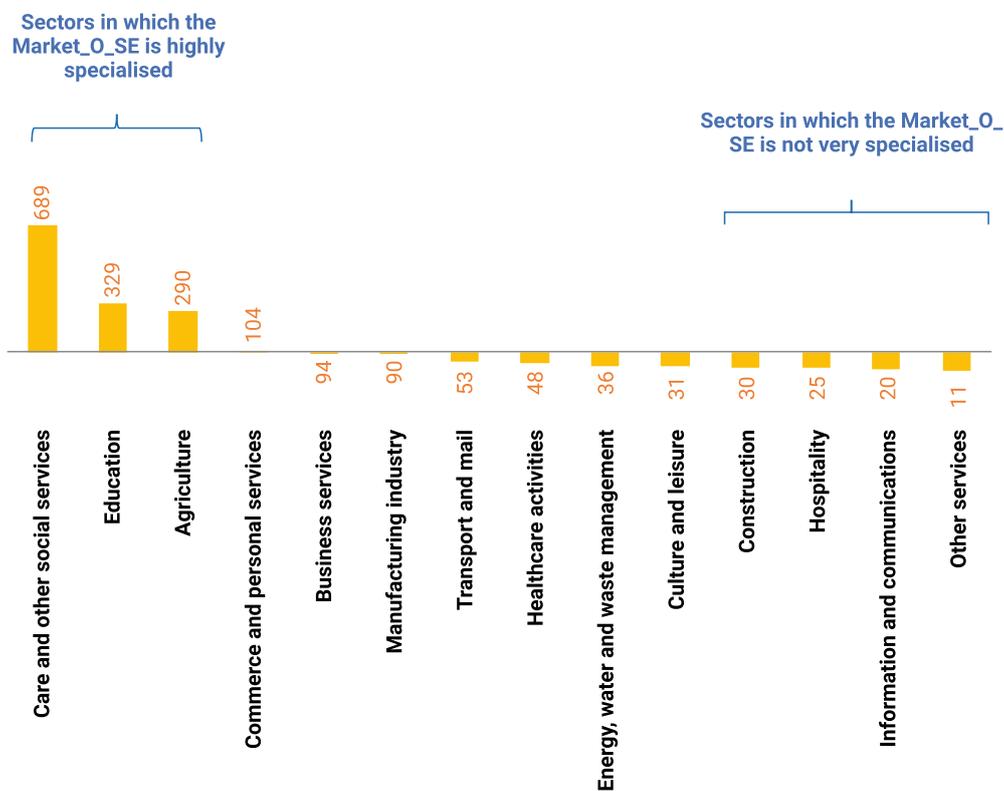
Productive specialisation can be defined as the bias that Social Economy has towards certain sectors (taking as reference the total economy excluding the public sector), with an approximation to this bias coming from the concentration of enterprises and employment in these sectors.

Analysing employment in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy and employment in the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector) as a relative development

Market-oriented Social Economy is highly specialised in care and other social services, education and agriculture, with the Social Economy as a whole also specialising in culture and leisure.

benchmark¹¹, strong specialisation of the former is found in the care and other social services sector (this sector is almost 7 times more important in market-oriented Social Economy employment than in the total economy excluding the public sector), education and agriculture. At the other end of the scale, the level of specialisation is low in other services, information and communications, hospitality, construction, energy and water, healthcare, and in transport and mail (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Sectoral specialisation of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy. Year 2021. Relationship between the weight of each sector in market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy employment and in employment for the total economy excluding the public sector (weight of the total economy excluding the public sector = 100).

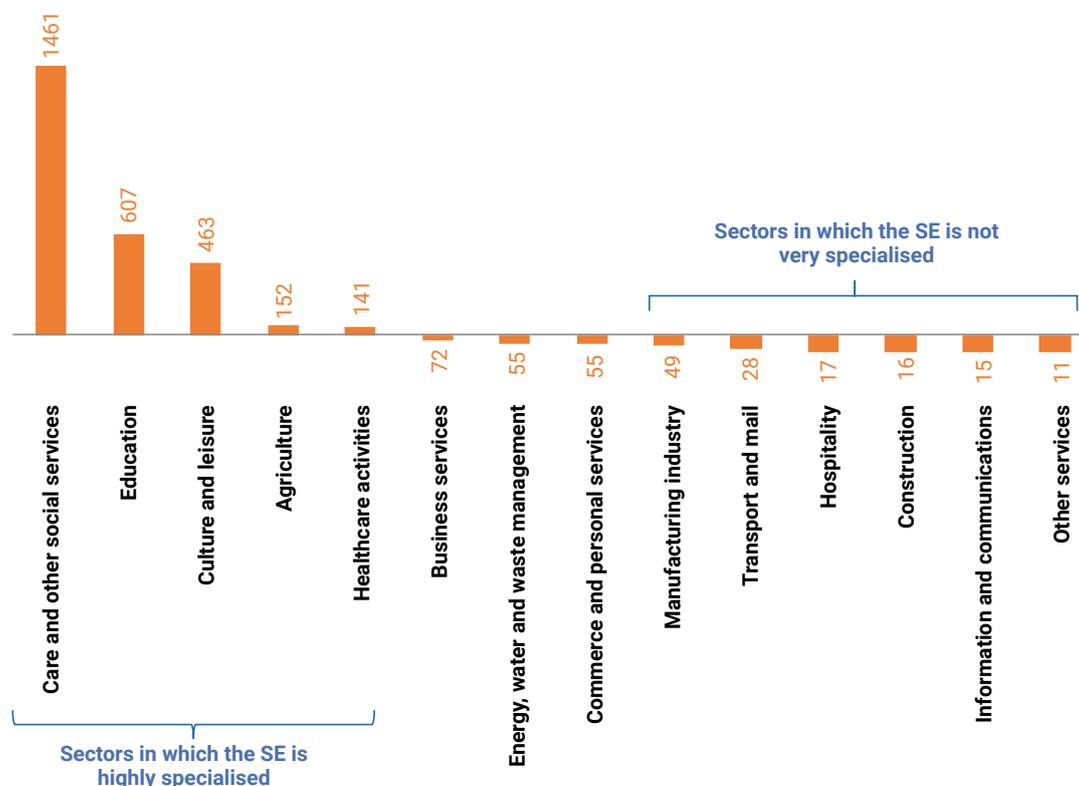


Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

The high level of specialisation of Social Economy as a whole in care and other social services stands out (this sector is 14 times more important in Social Economy employment than in the employment of the total economy excluding the public sector); also, in education and in culture and leisure. And, to a lesser extent, in agriculture and healthcare activities (Figure 4).

¹¹ The relative development benchmark of the Social Economy in a sector *i* has been defined as the percentage of sector.*i* in Social Economy employment (market-oriented and total) divided by the percentage of sector.*i* in employment of the total economy (excluding the public sector). The benchmark is expressed as an index number (weight in the total economy excluding the public sector = 100).

Figure 4. Sectoral specialisation of the Social Economy. Year 2021. Relationship between the weight of each sector in Social Economy employment and in employment for the total economy excluding the public sector (weight of the total economy excluding the public sector = 100).



Source: Continuous Sample of Professional Lives (2021) and own work.

4. ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

Levels of entrepreneurship can be analysed by looking at the age of the selected sample of enterprises and determining which of these are young enterprises, defined as those that recorded their first waged employee less than three years ago.

The level of entrepreneurship in the Social Economy is lower than the level observed in the total economy.

Approximately 6.0% of entities in the Social Economy are young enterprises, which is lower than the percentage found in the total economy excluding the public sector (10.6%). In principle, this seems to indicate a lower level of entrepreneurship in the Social Economy. With some differences, this low percentage of young enterprises in the total economy (excluding the public sector) is found in most regions (Table 6).

It should be pointed out that, like all information in this research, these figures refer to 2021 and clearly could be affected by the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the creation of enterprises in 2020 and 2021. In fact, the percentage of new enterprises is lower than the percentage found in 2017, both for the Social Economy and the total economy (excluding the public sector); in 2017, new enterprises amounted to 9.9% in the Social Economy and 15.9% in the total economy (excluding the public sector) (Martínez et a. 2020).

Table 6. Entrepreneurial dynamics in the Social Economy and in the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector), broken down by regions. Year 2021. Percentage of the total in each group that are young enterprises.

	Total Social Economy	Total Economy (excluding public sector) (Legal entities)	Total
Andalucía	5,7%	12,6%	12,1%
Aragón	5,2%	6,9%	6,8%
Asturias, Principado de	7,7%	7,9%	7,8%
Balears, Illes	6,3%	10,5%	10,3%
Canarias	6,5%	10,2%	10,0%
Cantabria	12,4%	7,9%	8,2%
Castilla y León	6,6%	8,4%	8,2%
Castilla - La Mancha	4,3%	9,3%	8,9%
Cataluña	5,4%	10,0%	9,7%
Comunitat Valenciana	5,6%	11,0%	10,6%
Extremadura	7,5%	11,8%	11,4%
Galicia	4,9%	8,5%	8,3%
Madrid, Comunidad de	7,1%	12,8%	12,6%
Murcia, Región de	8,8%	11,5%	11,3%
Navarra, Comunidad Foral de	3,4%	7,3%	6,9%
País Vasco	6,0%	8,4%	8,1%
Rioja, La	6,0%	7,5%	7,4%
Ceuta y Melilla	12,5%	14,7%	14,4%
Total	6,0%	10,6%	10,3%

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work..

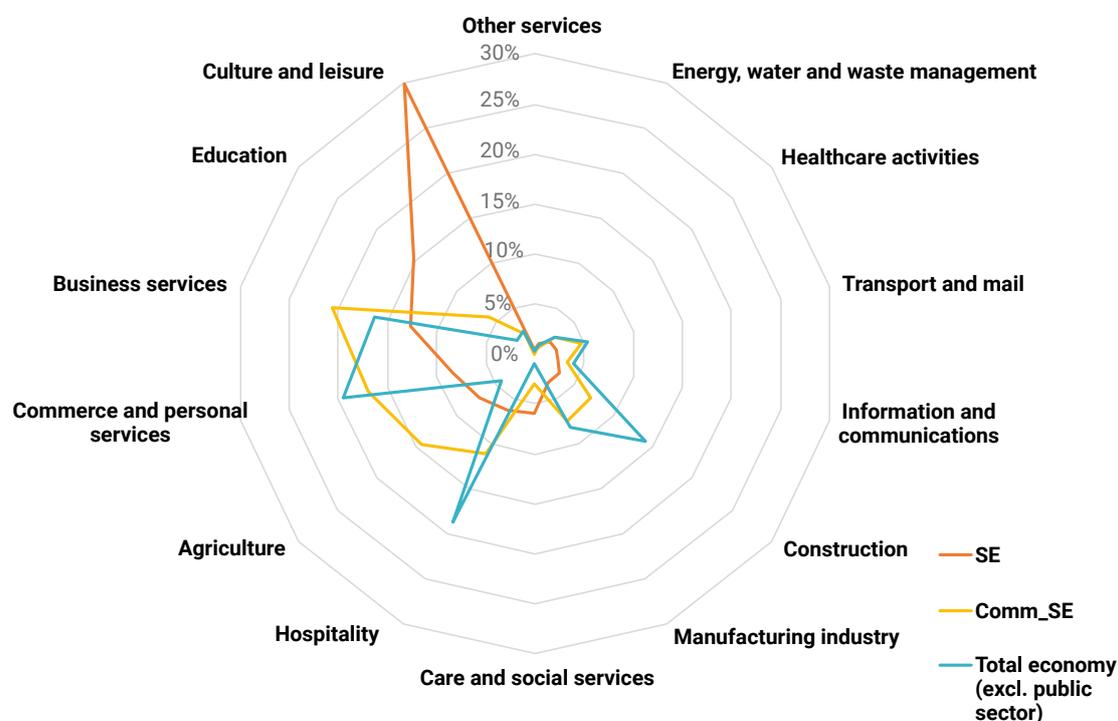
As regards the sectoral distribution of younger enterprises and entities, the culture and leisure sector is very dynamic in the Social Economy, with 30.0% of young entities found in this sector (compared to 2.5% in the case of the total economy excluding the public sector). This is followed by education (that represents 15.3% of young enterprises and entities), business services (12.7%), commerce and personal services (8.4%), and agriculture (7.0%) (Figure 5).

The sectoral distribution of new enterprises varies widely in the market-oriented Social Economy, in Social Economy as a whole, and in the economy as a whole excluding the public sector.

In the case of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy, business services, commerce and personal services, and agriculture bring together more than 50% of new enterprises.

Comparison with the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector) shows that younger enterprises follow the productive specialisation of the Social Economy to a large extent.

Figure 5. Distribution of young enterprises by sector of activity in the Social Economy and in the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector). Year 2021. Percentage of the total for each group.



Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

5. EVOLUTION OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN RECENT YEARS

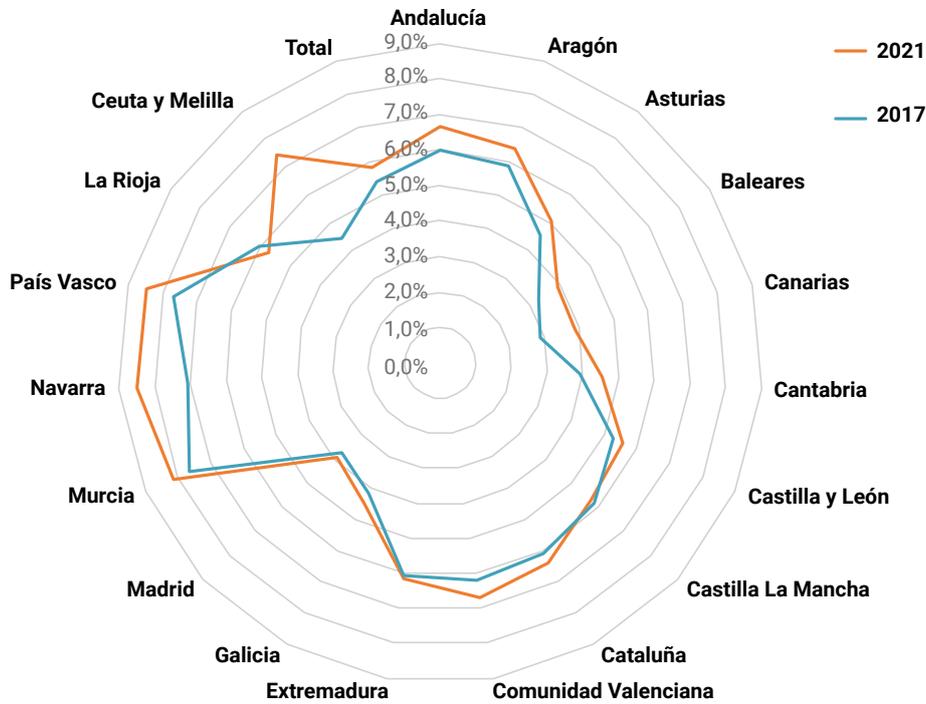
Given that this research project replicates the methodology used by the research carried out in 2019 using 2017 figures (Martínez et al. 2020), a comparative analysis is possible for some of the results. This may be of value given the shortfall in statistical sources that afford an understanding of the evolution of the Social Economy in Spain in economic terms.

The period 2017-2021 has been marked by the strong negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Spanish economy and the start of economic recovery in 2021. This has been, therefore, a turbulent time with an unprecedented economic setting that has affected all businesses. In such a setting, however, **the Social Economy has performed positively**,

The relative weight of the Social Economy in the period 2017-2021 has increased in almost every region and in most sectors of activity

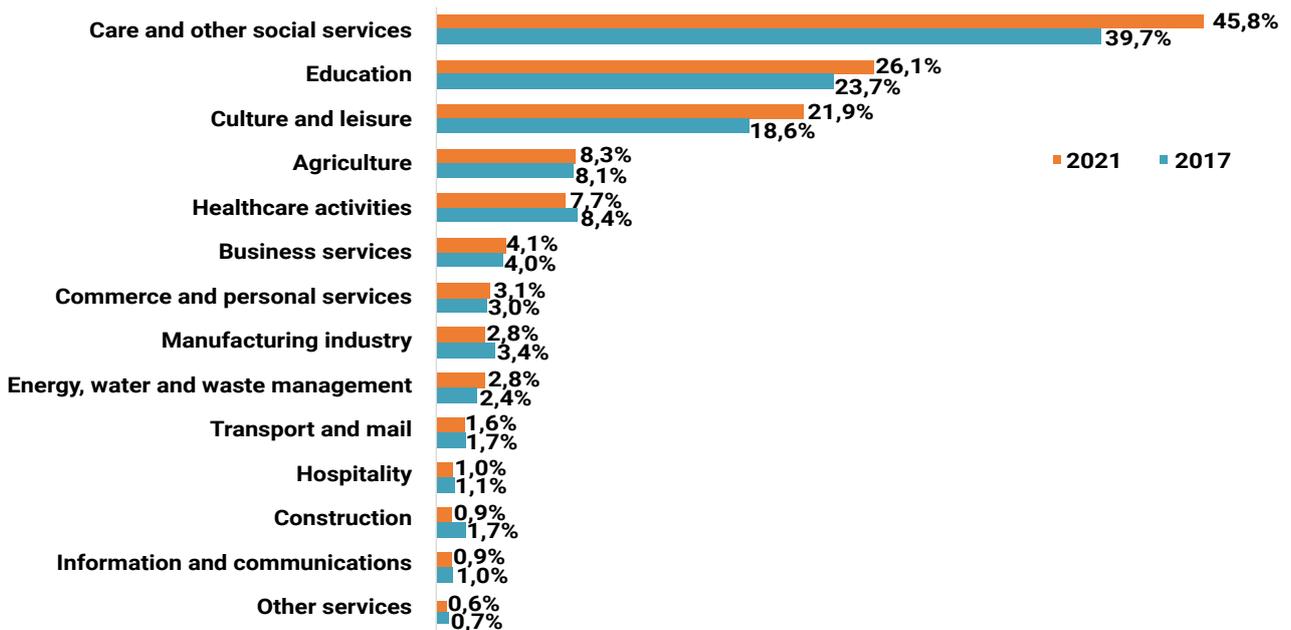
more so than the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector) since, in terms of employment, **its relative weight has increased in almost every region and in most sectors of activity** (Figures 6 and 7). Another significant aspect in the evolution of the Social Economy in this period has been a **strengthening of sectoral specialisation** (already found in 2017), mainly in care and other social services, education, culture and leisure, agriculture and fisheries.

Figure 6. Evolution in the weight of the Social Economy in the productive fabric, broken down by regions. Years 2017 and 2021. Percentage of total employment (excluding the public sector).



Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Figure 7. Evolution in the weight of the Social Economy in the business sector, broken down by sector of activity. Years 2017 and 2021. Percentage of total employment (excluding the public sector).



Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

CHAPTER II.

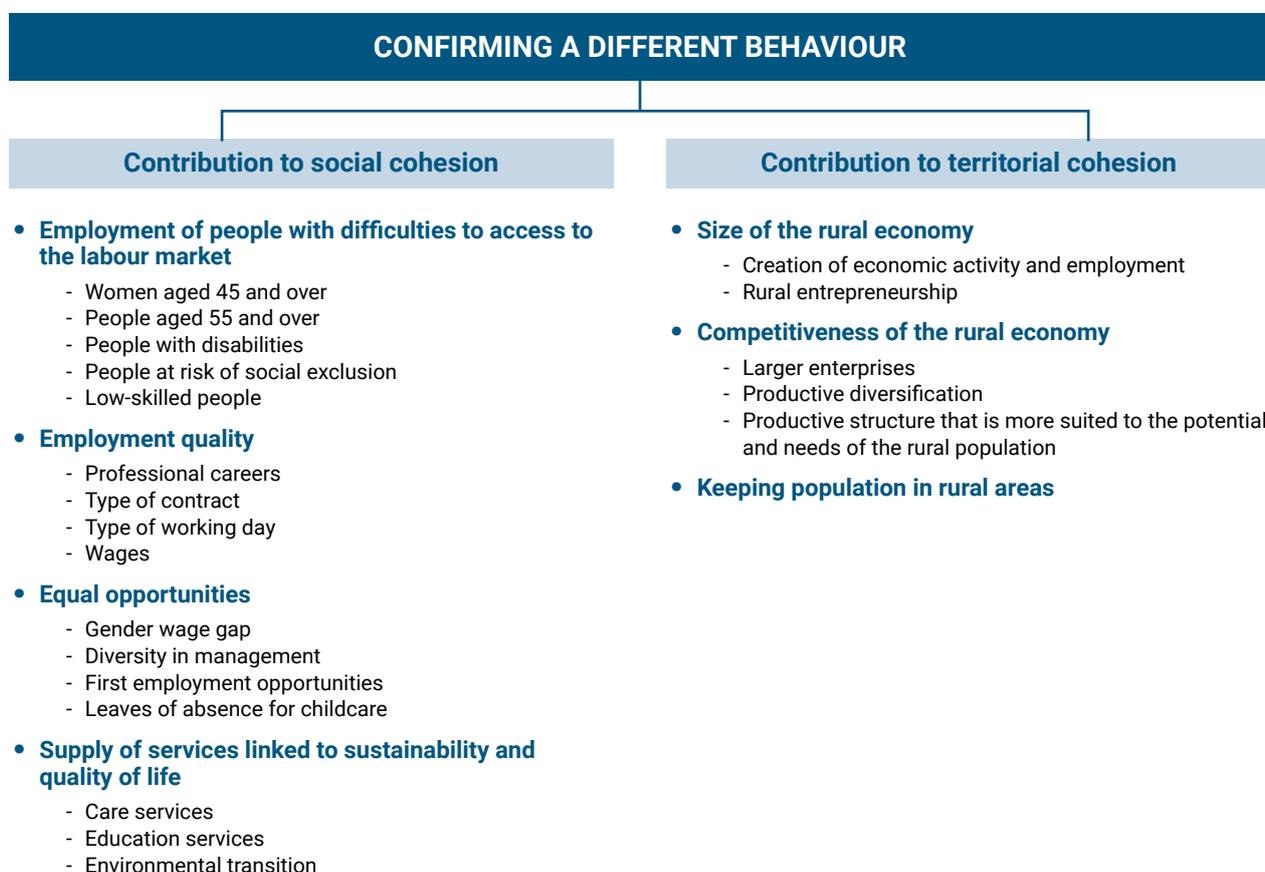
MEASURING THE DIFFERING BEHAVIOUR OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

1. INTRODUCTION

Different approaches, with different methodologies, have provided approximations to the social and economic impact of the Social Economy in the past decade. This study replicates the approach developed by Martínez et al. (2011, 2013, 2020) that addresses a counterfactual measurement of impact, focussing on the differing behaviour of Social Economy enterprises and entities compared to commercial companies. The hypothesis on which this chapter is based is that Social Economy enterprises are governed by values and principles that lead to them behaving differently than commercial companies. This differing behaviour has a series of consequences that are identified as effects on social and territorial cohesion. These differential effects will be quantified in the next chapter: firstly, in regard to the number of people affected, and as regards their participation and labour market conditions; and, secondly, in monetary units that help us quantify the overall impact.

Verifying the differing behaviour of the Social Economy requires us to statistically confirm these differences. Differential effects are classified in two areas: social cohesion and territorial cohesion. Specifically, contribution to social cohesion crystallizes in the employment of collectives that find it difficult to find employment, working conditions related to labour quality, equal opportunities for different collectives, the incorporation of people without prior formal job experience, and contributing to the existence of a wide supply of services linked to sustainability and quality of life (such as care services and other social services, education services and services related to environmental transition). As regards its contribution to territorial cohesion, this considers the contribution of the Social Economy to the size and competitiveness of the rural economy, and how it helps to maintaining rural population levels (Figure 8). A number of specific hypotheses are set within each of these areas that will be verified throughout this chapter.

Figure 8. Confirming the differential behaviour of Social Economy enterprises and entities in regard to their contribution to social and territorial cohesion.



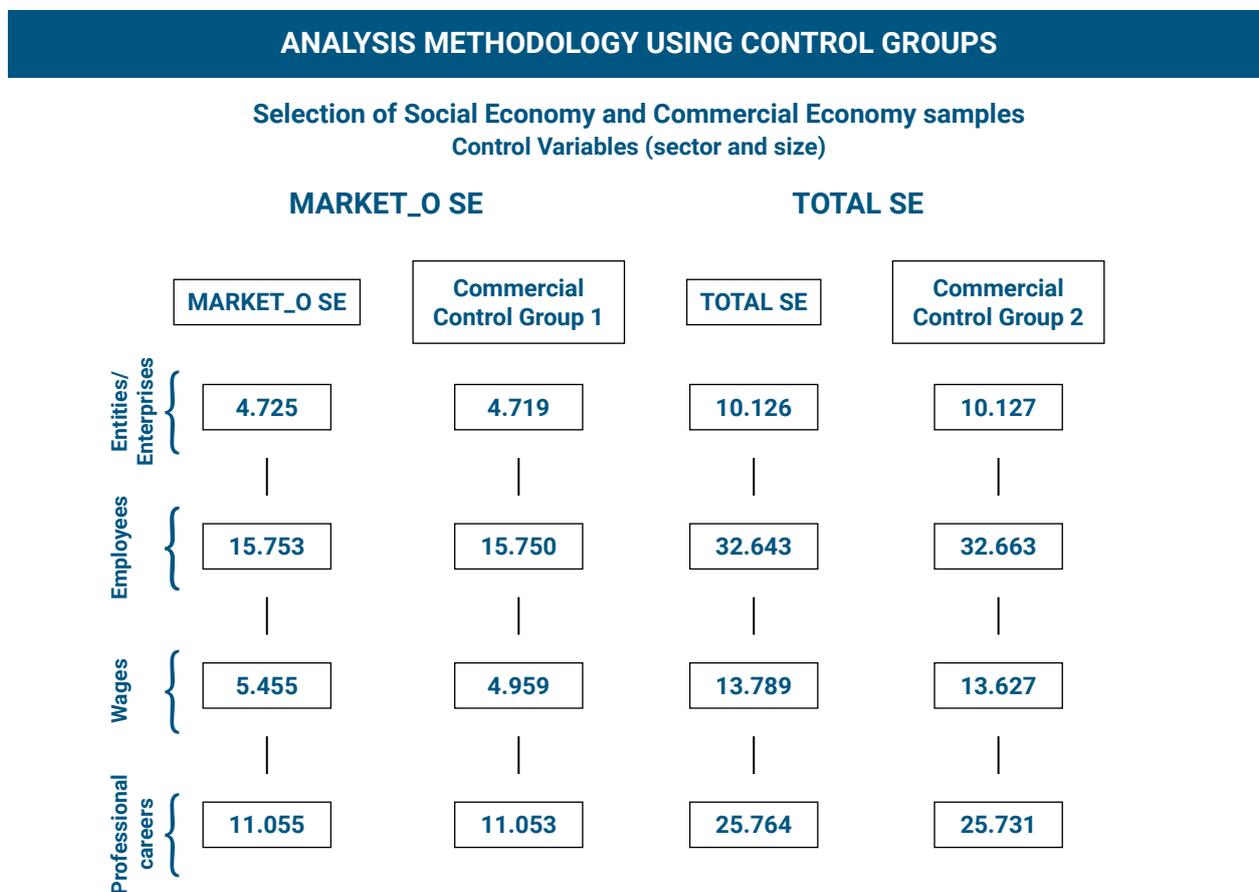
Source: Own work

For the purposes of measuring the differential aspects of Social Economy enterprises, control groups were designed that include limited liability companies and public limited companies and their workers, which **act as a reference in the measurement of the peculiar nature of the Social Economy**, grouping them in this analysis under the denomination of “commercial economy” control groups.

In order to value the different effects included in social and territorial cohesion, both groups must be compared in different spheres: enterprises and entities, employees, wages and professional careers. Our information source conditions the sample size of the groups used for comparison at each level, but all groups are of ample size (Figure 9). The sample of employees was the starting point, deriving from it the sample of enterprises and entities. Following this, only workers who have been employed full-time throughout 2021 were considered for the analysis of wages. The sub-sample to analyse professional careers includes people who have always been employed in the Social Economy since 2013 (see more detailed information in Annex II).

The control groups for each level were built from a cross-distribution of size and sector in each comparison area. Control groups were built equally for market or business sub-sector of the and total Social Economy.

Figure 9. Size of the samples used for market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy and Total Social Economy and their respective control groups. Year 2021.



Source: Own work based on MCVL 2021

The chapter has been organised in such a way that results are shown for the two main axes, bringing together the main contributions of the Social Economy to collective purpose around them: social cohesion is analysed in the first section, and territorial cohesion in the second.

2. CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIAL COHESION

Employment of collectives with difficulty to access the labour market

Among the potential contributions of the Social Economy to social cohesion, we find the **creation of jobs for collectives who usually find specific difficulties to access the labour market**, as their higher unemployment rates and longer periods of unemployment reflect. Inasmuch as the Social Economy has hiring policies in place that not only do not discriminate these workers but, in some cases, their employment becomes the social objective of such enterprises and entities (special employment centres or integration enterprises), they contribute to generating **much more inclusive employment**.

Employment of women over 45 and over 55 years old is higher in the Social Economy than in the commercial economy

Jobs of older workers are also higher when including male workers.

The **level of female employment is similar**¹² in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy and in commercial companies (on average, women represent 41.4% of all staff compared to 40.7% in the corresponding control group) (Table 7). The level of female employment is also similar between the Social Economy as a whole and commercial companies, though slightly higher in the latter (50.6% and 52.4% respectively). However, the relative presence of women aged 45 or more, who have the greatest difficulties to access the labour market, is higher in Social Economy enterprises and entities, both in market-oriented ones (27.7% of total staff vs. 22.1% in commercial companies) and as a whole (30.8% vs. 27.0%). There are also positive differences for the Social Economy in regard to women aged 55 or more, a collective with the greatest difficulties to access employment.

However, difficulties to access the labour market can be extended to all persons over the age of 45, and especially those aged over 55, as shown by the high proportion represented by this group in long-term unemployment. Comparing results, these groups persons, especially workers over the age of 55 are also more present in the Social Economy than in commercial companies, both in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy (20.7% vs. 15.7%) and in Social Economy as a whole (17.8% vs. 14.2%). (Table 7).

Younger people also find it difficult to access employment and have the highest unemployment rates. Their presence is similar in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy and in the corresponding control group (6.1% and 6.9%), but there are differences in the Social Economy overall, which favours their employment compared to the control group (10.0% vs. 8.7%).

Young people have a higher relative presence in non-market oriented Social Economy (foundations and associations).

Another great contribution of the Social Economy to social cohesion is found in the employment of disabled people. The average percentage of disabled people (at a level over 33%) in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy (which includes special employment centres) is 18.4%, while in the companies of the control group they amount only to 1.2%. In the case of the Social Economy as a whole, the respective percentages are 10.5% and 1.2% (Table 7).

The greatest difference found in Social Economy in regard to generating inclusive employment is found in the case of disabled people

Furthermore, there are differential characteristics regarding disabled workers in the Social Economy, which strengthens the integration work these enterprises carry out. Thus, the percentage of workers with higher levels of disability (65% or over) is also higher in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy compared to commercial companies (2.2% vs. 0.1% in the control group), and also in the Social Economy as a whole (1.4% vs 0.1%) (Table 7).

¹² All differences noted throughout this chapter are significant in statistical terms (ANOVA comparisons for the difference of means, or Chi-squared comparisons) with significance levels below 5%. The corresponding tables will point out when these differences are not significant

Table 7. Presence of groups of persons with difficulties to access employment in Social Economy enterprises and entities and in commercial companies. Year 2021.

	The market or business sub-sector of the social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)	Total social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)
Women				
Women. Average percentage of women in the total employment of each enterprise or entity	41,4%	40,7%	50,6%	52,4%
Women aged 45 and over. Percentage of total employment in every group	27,7%	22,1%	30,8%	27,0%
Aged between 45 and 54	20,2%	16,6%	22,3%	20,1%
Aged 55 and over	7,5%	5,5%	8,5%	6,9%
Aged over 45				
Workers aged between 45 and 54. Average percentage of total employment in each enterprise or entity	29,4%	27,8%	26,7%	25,3%
Workers aged between 55 and over. Average percentage of total employment in each enterprise or entity	20,7%	15,7%	17,8%	14,2%
Under 25				
Workers aged under 25. Average percentage of total employment in each enterprise or entity	6,1%	6,9%	10,0%	8,7%
Disabled people				
Workers with a disability (Level over 33%). Average percentage of total employment in each enterprise or entity	18,4%	1,2%	10,5%	1,2%
Characteristics of disabled workers. Percentage of total workers with a disability				
A disability level of between 33% and 65%	16,2%	1,1%	9,1%	1,1%
A disability level of 65% or over	2,2%	0,1%	1,4%	0,1%

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work..

La generación de empleo para trabajadores/as con bajos niveles de cualificación refuerza la contribución de la Economía Social a la cohesión social...

Another significant contribution of the Social Economy to inclusive employment is the significant presence of low-skilled workers in such enterprises. Low-skilled workers are also affected by high unemployment rates and longer periods of unemployment.

On the basis of the distribution of employment according to professional groups (which is an approximation to professional structure based on social security contribution payments), the group of labourers and equivalent jobs (workers with the lowest qualifications) represent one third (33.2%) of staff in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy, whereas this percentage in the commercial companies of the corresponding control group is 20.6% (Table 8). Although with lower percentages, this difference still holds for the Social Economy as a whole (19.8% vs. 13.9%).

Table 8. Professional structure in Social Economy enterprises and in commercial companies. Year 2021.

	Market or business sub-sector of the social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)	Total social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)
Professional group	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
01. Engineers, graduates, top management	5,3%	7,1%	12,3%	9,5%
02. Assistant engineers, assistant graduates	6,7%	6,0%	13,6%	9,1%
03. Administrative and workshop managers	4,5%	5,3%	4,9%	5,0%
04. Non-graduate assistants	2,4%	4,3%	4,5%	4,6%
05. Administrative officers	15,3%	14,0%	13,1%	11,8%
06. Junior employees	2,6%	5,9%	5,7%	8,1%
07. Administrative clerks	8,5%	13,1%	10,1%	15,6%
08. Certified workers and operators	11,6%	14,9%	9,2%	14,9%
09. Assistant workers	9,9%	8,7%	6,8%	7,7%
10. Labourers and equivalent	33,2%	20,6%	19,8%	13,9%

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Lastly, one of the collectives who find it hardest to access the labour market, and for whom employment is the main path to integration, is that of persons at risk of social exclusion. The specialised work carried out by integration enterprises, a type of Social Economy entity, is indispensable for the social integration of this collective by way of employment.

..., however, in qualitative terms, perhaps the most significant finding is the incorporation of collectives at risk of social exclusion into employment.

The Continuous Sample of Working Lives does not suitably identify this collective of workers or such integration enterprises. To this end, we turned to FAEDEI, the Spanish Federation of Employers' Associations of Integration Enterprises, to obtain some basic figures. In 2020, there were 226 integration enterprises, which employed close to 4,595 at-risk people (FAEDEI, 2020). We must add to this figure the number of workers who develop integration roadmaps for at-risk people, which raises the number of persons working in these enterprises to 7,699 (Table 9).

Table 9. Number of integration enterprises and workers in integration pathways. Year 2020.

	Social Economy	Commercial companies
Number of integration companies	226	0
Total number of workers	7.699	n.a.
Number of workers in integration pathways	4.595	n.a.

Source: CEPES (FAEDEI)

It may be concluded, therefore, that the Social Economy employs women aged over 45, people aged over 55, disabled persons, persons who are socially excluded or at risk of social exclusion, and low-skilled workers more than the companies in the control group. These differences are what shape the main contribution of Social Economy enterprises to social cohesion.

Employment conditions

Professional careers

Professional careers are much more stable for workers in the Social Economy than in commercial companies: the percentage of workers without periods of unemployment is almost double in the period analysed.

To analyse the differences in the professional careers of waged workers in the Social Economy, an ad hoc comparison was carried out with their respective control groups¹³, considering the waged workers in the commercial companies that make up these control groups

Thus, the comparison carried out considers the professional careers of workers in the Social Economy, focusing on the instance that takes place in the Social Economy continuously, and of the groups of workers in commercial companies. The main results can be summarised as follows (Table 10).

- a.- Although the average length of employment stretches is shorter in the Social Economy than in commercial companies, **employment in the Social Economy is much more stable:** 70.4% of its workers have experienced one or more instances of continuous employment

¹³ See the introduction to this chapter for further details.

(without times of unemployment) in the period analysed (64.6% in the case of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy). Meanwhile, as regards the commercial companies that make up the control groups, these percentages fall to 36.5% and 37.8% respectively.

- b.- The average number of employment instances also confirms the greater stability of professional careers for Social Economy workers (who, on average, have 5.3 instances for every 10 years of professional life, compared to 10.7 in the control group). This greater stability is also found in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy (5.6 instances every 10 years compared to 10.4 in the commercial company control group).
- c.- In line with the above, the average length of employment instances is also higher, especially in Social Economy as a whole.
- d.- As a result of this greater stability in employment, workers in the Social Economy have **fewer instances of unemployment receiving benefits and these instances are shorter in length on average.**

Table 10. Professional careers of waged workers in the Social Economy (1) and in commercial companies.

	Market sub-sector of the social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)	Total social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)
Sample size (no. of workers)	11.055	11.053	25.764	25.731
Average length of the careers analysed (years)	5,4	8,1	5,4	7,8
INSTANCES OF EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT				
Persons with continuous employment experiences (% of total)	64,6%	37,8%	70,4%	36,5%
Persons with one or more instances of unemployment receiving benefits (% of total)	22,2%	40,5%	15,0%	38,2%
Average number of employment instances (every 10 years)	5,6	10,4	5,3	10,7
Average length of employment instances (years)	3,3	3,2	3,7	3,0
Average number of unemployment instances receiving benefits (every 10 years)	3,2	3,8	1,8	3,0
Average length of unemployment instances receiving benefits (months)	0,8	1,7	0,5	1,7

(1) Not including workers in integration enterprises or special employment centres.

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Stability of the employment relationship

When it comes to analyse stability in the employment relationships of workers in Social Economy enterprises and entities, the fact their structure mostly comprises self-employed workers¹⁴ should be considered, and, as such, waged employment is more likely linked to variations in production and will, therefore, oscillate more.

In regard to the type of contract used, the level of fixed-term employment is higher in the Social Economy.

The Social Economy presents a higher level of fixed-term waged employment. The percentage of workers with open-ended contracts in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy is 77.3%, compared to 80.1% in the control group. This difference is slightly smaller, but still negative, in the case of the Social Economy as a whole (76.5% vs. 79.7% in commercial companies). This temporary nature is true for both men and women, and also for most specific group of persons that are more relatively present in the Social Economy (Table 11). From the perspective of effective stability, however, as shown in

the previous section, the Social Economy provides a more stable employment context, with fewer and, on average, longer instances of employment.

Table 11. Workers with a stable employment relationship in the Social Economy (1) and in commercial companies, broken down by certain collectives. Year 2021. Percentage of the total for each group.

	Market sub-sector of social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)		Social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)	
Waged workers with open-ended employment contracts	77,3%	80,1%		76,5%	79,7%	
Men	79,0%	80,3%		76,1%	80,5%	
Women	75,6%	80,0%		76,7%	79,2%	
Women over 45	84,5%	87,9%		86,6%	87,0%	
Persons under 25	39,8%	44,7%		38,5%	43,4%	(-)
Persons over 55	87,1%	87,1%	(-)	87,2%	87,8%	
Disabled workers	75,3%	81,4%		78,9%	81,9%	(-)
Low-skilled workers	67,9%	67,0%		67,7%	69,7%	(-)

(1) Not including workers in integration enterprises or special employment centres.

(-) Differences not statistically significant

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

¹⁴ Self-employed workers (members of societies) represent 14.9% of all employment in cooperatives, worker-owned societies and agricultural transformation societies, compared to 3.9% in companies in the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector).

Type of working day

Part-time employment is relatively less common in market-oriented Social Economy, but not in the Social Economy as a whole.

As regards the working day, it should be pointed out that **the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy has lower levels of part-time employment than commercial companies** (22.2% of part-time employment compared to 24.0% in the control group). This lower level of part-time employment is true for both men and women, for workers under 25 and women over 45 (Table 12).

In the Social Economy as a whole, part-time employment is relatively higher than in commercial companies. This difference is true for several of the specific groups of people that find access to employment difficult (Table 12).

Table 12. Part-time employees in the Social Economy and in commercial companies, broken down by certain collectives. Year 2021. Percentage of the total for each group.

	Market sub-sector of the social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)		Social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)	
Part-time employees	22,2%	24,0%		31,0%	30,5%	(-)
Men	12,9%	10,7%		23,6%	17,1%	
Women	31,9%	37,4%		36,6%	40,3%	
Women over 45	32,7%	35,0%		33,9%	37,7%	
Persons under 25	32,1%	43,8%		54,7%	53,1%	(-)
Persons over 55	23,7%	23,4%	(-)	27,8%	29,1%	
Disabled workers	26,6%	30,2%	(-)	27,0%	33,1%	
Low-skilled workers	21,5%	21,3%		25,8%	29,5%	

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work
(-) Differences not statistically significant

Wages

Wages are clearly one of the main variables linked to quality of employment. Comparisons with commercial companies (control groups) allow us to identify specific aspects of the Social Economy, in regard to both wage levels and, especially, wage dispersion (Tables 13 to 15):

Average wages are similar for workers in the Social Economy and in commercial companies but are higher for women and persons over 55 in the former.

a) Wage levels, considered by the median value¹⁵, are very similar for workers as a whole and also for most of the collectives considered. Overall, the median wage of workers in the Social Economy is slightly higher (approximately 10%) than the control group. In the case of the Market or business sub-sector of Social Economy, these values are almost identical¹⁶.

Table 13. Wages of full-time employees in Social Economy enterprises and entities and in commercial companies (1). Year 2021. Euros.

	Market sub-sector of social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)	Social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)
Gross annual wage (median value in €)	21.178	21.380	22.777	20.682
Gross annual wage (average value in €)	25.679	29.132	27.737	27.527
Dispersion (Standard deviation)	18.996	34.703	47.109	39.505

Notes: Doesn't include wages in País Vasco or Navarra.

Only includes workers who have worked full-time for the whole of 2021.

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

b) Women earn 24% more in the Social Economy than in commercial companies (9% more in the case of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy). There are also significant differences in the case of workers aged over 55 (21% more in the Social Economy) and workers with a disability level over 65% (16% more).

c) As regards professional category (considering social security contribution groups), the largest differences with the control group are found in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy. Administrative staff have an average wage that is 17% higher; this figure is 9.0% in the case of assistant engineers (Table 14). At the other

The wage structure is more equal in the Social Economy (that is, differences between the highest and lowest wages are smaller) than in commercial companies.

end of the scale, the average wage of workers in top management and with high qualifications, administrative managers, workshop managers and junior employees are significantly lower than in the control group.

d) Social Economy enterprises and entities are more egalitarian in regard to different dimensions: that is, there is lower wage dispersion based on gender, professional category, age range and geographical location (Table 15). This lower wage dispersion is clearly showcased

¹⁵ This measurement is used instead of the average due to the high level of dispersion found in wage variables

¹⁶ It should be pointed out, however, that the Continuous Sample of Working Lives does not include the wages of workers in Basque Country or Navarra and that, given the higher average wages in these two regions and greater relative prominence of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy there, this may lead to an underestimation of the average wage for the Social Economy, especially in regard to the market-oriented Social Economy.

in the case of the median values for top management groups. Thus, in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy, the wages of top management and highly-qualified workers are 77.0% higher than the overall average wage, compared to a 122.0% difference in the control group.

Table 14. Wages of full-time workers in Social Economy enterprises and entities and in commercial companies. Year 2021. Differences compared to control groups (=100)¹⁷.

	Market sub-sector of social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)	Social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)
Total Workers	99	100	110	100
Men	92	100	94	100
Women	109	100	124	100
Persons under 25	95	100	97	100
Persons aged 25-44	97	100	106	100
Persons aged 45-54	95	100	110	100
Persons 55 and over	108	100	121	100
Disabled workers (33%-65%)	95	100	99	100
Disabled workers (over 65%)	115	100	116	100
01. Engineers, graduates, top management	79	100	95	100
02. Assistant engineers, assistant graduates	109	100	108	100
03. Administrative and workshop managers	86	100	105	100
04. Non-graduate assistants	69	100	84	100
05. Administrative officers	99	100	103	100
06. Junior employees	97	100	109	100
07. Administrative clerks	117	100	113	100
08. Certified workers and operators	96	100	89	100
09. Assistant workers	93	100	97	100
10. Labourers and equivalent	94	100	96	100
With open-ended contracts	100	100	111	100
With fixed-term contracts	104	100	111	100
In urban areas	94	100	111	100
In rural areas	104	100	110	100
Spanish citizens	97	100	108	100
Foreigners	97	100	106	100

Notes: Wages in Basque Country or Navarra are not included.
Only includes workers who have worked full-time for the whole of 2021.
Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work

¹⁷ For any readers who are unfamiliar with this way of presenting this information, it should be pointed out that this is how information is normalised. That is, the different wage values for the control groups (for men, women, etc.), have been equalised to 100 and the corresponding value for the same category in the Social Economy group then calculated (using the control group value as basis). This allows us to easily read the relative differences between each group. Thus, if the average wage for men in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy group is 91.0, this means that it is 9.0% lower than for men working in the control group.

Table 15. Wages of full-time workers in Social Economy enterprises and entities, and in commercial companies, broken down by workers' characteristics and their job position. Year 2021. Differences compared to the total average wage of each group (=100)¹⁸.

	Market sub-sector of the social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)	Social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)
Total Workers [n=30,906]	100	100	100	100
Men	102	109	102	119
Women	97	89	99	88
Persons under 25	74	77	70	80
Persons aged 25-44	97	99	97	101
Persons aged 45-54	104	109	107	107
Persons 55 and over	103	94	101	92
Disabled workers (33%-65%)	80	83	78	78
Disabled workers (over 65%)	100	86	89	76
01. Engineers, graduates, top management	177	222	164	190
02. Assistant engineers, assistant graduates	149	135	130	133
03. Administrative and workshop managers	179	206	144	151
04. Non-graduate assistants	110	157	90	117
05. Administrative officers	119	120	109	117
06. Junior employees	73	74	75	76
07. Administrative clerks	92	77	80	78
08. Certified workers and operators	96	99	85	106
09. Assistant workers	77	82	71	80
10. Labourers and equivalent	71	75	65	74
With open-ended contracts	102	101	101	101
With fixed-term contracts	77	73	80	79
In urban areas	102	107	106	105
In rural areas	98	93	94	94
Spanish citizens	103	105	102	105
Foreigners	80	82	80	83

Notes: Wages in Basque Country or Navarra are not included.

Only includes workers who have worked full-time for the whole of 2021.

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives.

¹⁸ Like in the previous table, information has been normalised to make comparison easier.

Equal opportunities

A third axis in how Social Economy enterprises contribute to social cohesion is in the sphere of **equal opportunities**. This principle is **much more prevalent** in the Social Economy than in commercial companies, as the results for some of its dimensions show: gender wage gap, diversity in management positions and the possibility of requesting leaves of absence for the care of dependent persons.

Gender wage gap

Gender wage gaps in the Social Economy are significantly smaller than in commercial companies.

In the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy, women working full time earn 4% less than men on average, but this difference in the control group is of 19% (Table 16). Therefore, **the gender wage gap in commercial companies is five times higher than in the market oriented Social Economy**. This difference is larger still when comparing with the Social Economy as a whole: in this case, women earn 3% less than men, compared to the 26% difference found in commercial companies

Table 16. Gender wage gaps in Social Economy enterprises and entities, and in commercial companies. Year 2021. Differences compared to men in the same category (men's wage = 100).

	Market sub-sector of the social economy		Commercial companies (Control group 1)		Total Social economy		Commercial companies (Control group 2)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Total Workers	100	96	100	81	100	97	100	74
Persons under 25	100	104	100	95	100	97	100	91
Persons aged 25-44	100	98	100	88	100	101	100	80
Persons aged 45-54	100	96	100	78	100	100	100	70
Persons 55 and over	100	91	100	71	100	87	100	65
In urban areas	100	100	100	80	100	99	100	77
In rural areas	100	92	100	81	100	93	100	70

Notes: Wages in Basque Country or Navarra are not included.

Only includes workers who have worked full-time for the whole of 2021.

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Gender wage gaps increase with age, both in the Social Economy and in commercial companies, but are always smaller in the Social Economy. It should be pointed out that women under 25 have a slightly higher wage than their male counterparts and this is very likely explained by higher qualifications. At the other end of the scale, the largest wage gaps are seen in women over 55; they are, however, much smaller in the Social Economy as a whole (13 points vs. 35 points in commercial companies) and in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy (9 points vs. 29 points in commercial companies).

Diversity in top management

The results obtained from the Continuous Sample of Working Lives show that the Social Economy, especially the market-oriented Social Economy, is more diverse in top management and high-qualification jobs¹⁹ and that this diversity is not only gender-based but also in regard to disabled people (Table 17).

In the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy enterprises, the presence of women in top management and in highly-qualified positions reaches 54.6%, compared to 47.4% in the commercial companies found in the corresponding control group²⁰. The presence of disabled workers in top management and highly-qualified positions is also significantly higher in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy enterprises (3.4% compared to 0.6% in the control group). Also, there are more workers aged over 55 (19.2% vs. 15.4%).

The market-oriented Social Economy has greater gender and functional diversity in its top management and in positions that require high qualification.

There are no significant differences in regard to the presence of women aged 25-34. This is an age in which a proportion of women start to have children, which is something that hinders their access to (and remaining in) management positions of responsibility. The same is true for young persons under 25.

In the case of foreign workers, their presence in top management and highly-qualified positions is more uncommon in the Social Economy than in commercial companies.

Table 17. Diversity in top management and very highly-qualified positions in Social Economy enterprises and entities, and in commercial companies. Year 2021. Percentage of different collectives over the total of Contribution Group 01.

	Market sub-sector of the social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)		Total Social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)	
Women	54,6%	47,4%		59,2%	53,5%	
Women aged 25-34	11,3%	12,3%	(-)	12,1%	12,5%	(-)
Disabled workers (over 33%)	3,4%	0,6%		1,8%	0,7%	
Persons aged 55 and over	19,2%	15,4%		17,2%	14,3%	
Persons aged under 25	2,2%	2,1%	(-)	2,5%	2,5%	(-)
Foreigners	4,1%	14,7%		8,2%	15,5%	

Note: Not including partners who contribute to social security through the Special Self-Employment Scheme
Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

(-) Differences not statistically significant

¹⁹ Diversity in management has been approached by means of the social security contribution group "01 Engineers, graduates and top management". This group includes not only top management positions but very highly-qualified jobs (graduates and engineers), which can't be disaggregated.

²⁰ This analysis does not include partners who contribute to social security through the Self-Employment Scheme as there is no information regarding which group they fall under.

Although gender wage gaps are still high in these positions, the gap is much smaller than in commercial enterprises.

The contribution of the Social Economy to equal opportunities in the business sector goes beyond the presence of groups of people who are regularly under-represented in top management and highly-qualified positions and **extends also to certain working conditions**²¹, especially in regard to **wages** (Table 18).

Although **the gender wage gap of full-time workers** in these top management and highly-qualified positions is high²² (measured in comparison to the average wage for a man aged 45-54 working full time), it is **significantly lower in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy enterprises than in commercial companies** (21.5% vs 45.1%). That is, a woman working full time in top management or in a highly-qualified position in a market-oriented Social Economy enterprise earns a wage that is 21.5% lower than a man aged 45-54 in a similar position. This difference increases up to 45.1% in the control group. The wage gap is also smaller in the group of women aged 25-44, when maternity and child-raising mainly take place (23.2% vs 48.3%).

Considering the Social Economy as a whole, gender wage gaps for women in top management and in high-qualification positions are, overall, still smaller than for the control group.

However, the temporary nature of waged employment is greater in both the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy enterprises and entities and in the Social Economy overall. The percentages of women and of women aged 25-44 in top management and in high-qualification positions with an open-ended contract are 81.8% and 74.7% respectively in the market-oriented Social Economy, and 82.2% and 76.1% in the Social Economy as a whole, all of which are lower than the figures found in the corresponding control groups (Table 18).

Table 18. Employment conditions of the different groups of persons in top management and high-qualification positions in the Social Economy and in commercial companies. Year 2021. Professional Group 01.

	The market sub-sector of the social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)		Total Social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)	
Wage gap (compared to a man aged 45-54)						
Men aged 45-54	100	100		100	100	
Women	78,1	54,9		79,1	66,4	
Women aged 25-44	76,8	51,7		70,4	59,7	
Women aged over 55	94,7	87,7		101,8	90,4	
Open-ended contract (% of total)						
Women	81,8%	90,9%		82,2%	88,6%	
Women aged 25-44	74,7%	89,1%		76,1%	88,1%	
Women aged over 55	93,1%	93,6%	(-)	92,9%	91,6%	(-)

Note: Not including partners who contribute to social security through the Special Self-Employment Scheme

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

(-) Differences not statistically significant

21 The sample of disabled workers, workers aged under 25 and foreign workers at this level is insufficient to obtain information regarding their working conditions

22 It should be noted that partners contributing under the Special Self-Employment Scheme are not included within the scope of this study.

Leaves of absence for childcare and caring for other dependent people

The information available in the Continuous Sample of Working Lives also allows us to quantify how many workers enjoy leaves of absence for childcare or for caring of other relatives or persons of whom they are in charge. This number is also significantly higher in Social Economy enterprises and entities (Table 19). Thus, in the case of women, the number of annual leaves of absence per 100,000 workers is 946 in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy compared to 592 in commercial companies. Although these figures are very small in the case of men, leaves of absence in the market-oriented Social Economy are double those in commercial companies (64 leaves of absence per 100,000 workers vs. 30 leaves of absence per year in the case of commercial companies).

The ratio of workers who take leaves of absence to take care of other people is higher in the Social Economy but gender-based differences are still very high.

In the Social Economy overall, the number of leaves of absence is higher than for the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy in the case of women, but the difference compared to commercial companies remains the same (50% higher).

Given that the control group has been designed in such a way that the sectors and sizes of the undertakings it contains are very similar (which, in turn, determines the type of professions and employment conditions, hence making both groups very similar), it may be interpreted that this difference is based on a business culture that favours to a greater extent taking leaves of absence for childcare or to take care of other people in their charge.

Table 19. Workers who take leaves of absence for childcare or to take care of other people in the Social Economy and in commercial companies, broken down by gender. Year 2021.

	The market sub-sector of the social economy		Commercial companies (Control group 1)		Total social economy		Commercial companies (Control group 2)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Sample size (no. of workers)	5.184	5.871	5.308	5.745	10.275	15.489	10.071	15.660
Number of annual leaves of absence for childcare or to take care of other persons (for every 100,000 workers)	64	852	30	595	55	946	44	592

(1) Not including workers in integration enterprises or special employment centres.

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

First employment opportunities

The Social Economy offers first employment opportunities to workers with no prior formal job experience to a greater extent than commercial companies.

Another area where the Social Economy contributes to social cohesion through the labour market is by incorporating people who have no prior formal job experience; that is, offering their first employment opportunity to people who have never before had an employment contract, even if in some cases they may have worked informally.

In order to verify the above hypothesis, a sub-sample has been created comprising people who registered as workers for the first time between the years 2010 and 2021 in the Social Economy and in the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector)²³. The figures for the different groups of people within this sub-sample have been calculated relative to net employment created in this period²⁴. This allows us to compare the average tendency to incorporate people without prior experience in both groups. Based on the results obtained, it may be stated that **more inclusive job creation by the Social Economy can be extended to people without prior working experience and, in particular, among groups of persons with greater difficulties to access employment** (Table 20).

This greater likelihood to incorporate persons without prior job experience is found throughout all collectives that have difficulties to access employment and is also very high in the case of disabled people.

In the past decade, the Social Economy has incorporated 2,418 workers with difficulties to access employment for every 1,000 net jobs created. This implies there is an average tendency that is 3.46 times higher than the total economy (excluding the public sector). This tendency is similar for young people aged below 25. In the case of low-skilled workers and women aged over 45, the Social Economy is three times as likely to offer them first employment opportunities than the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector), and twice as likely in the case of persons aged over 55 and all other workers (who do not have specific difficulties to access the labour market).

The collective of disabled persons is also worth noting since the Social Economy (including special employment centres) is 18.3 times more likely to offer first employment opportunities to this collective than the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector).

In relative terms (that is, considering its size²⁵), the Social Economy has offered, overall, more than three times as many opportunities to people without prior job experience than the economy

23 Note that in this section we no longer work with control groups but with the concept of the economy as a whole (excluding the public sector), as defined in the first chapter.

24 This variable is used to relativize gross values since the size of the Social Economy is much smaller than the other group (economy as a whole excluding the public sector). Please note that this is not a cumulative figure of the employment created in this period (it would be difficult to discern this value and would require working on all the editions of the Continuous Sample of Working Lives in this period) but, rather, the difference between the employment of both groups in 2021 and 2010.

25 Estimated, in this case, based on net employment created in this period.

as a whole (excluding the public sector). Considering that a lack of experience is considered one of the main barriers to accessing employment, this is undoubtedly an important contribution to the employability of these workers.

Table 20. First employment opportunities offered by the Social Economy and by commercial companies in the period 2010-2021. Workers without prior experience for every 1,000 net jobs created in the period and index numbers.

	Social Economy (‰)	Commercial companies (legal entity) (‰)	Social Economy (index number)	Commercial companies (legal entity) (=100)
Workers with difficulties to access employment	2.418	706	343	100
Disabled persons	109	6	1826	100
Workers aged under 25	1.527	438	349	100
Low-skilled workers	728	241	302	100
Women aged over 45	31	11	284	100
Persons aged over 55	24	11	226	100
All other workers	336	147	228	100
Total workers	2.754	853	323	100

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Contribution to a wide supply of services linked to sustainability and quality of life

Another effect that the scientific literature associates with the Social Economy is the fact that these enterprises guarantee the supply of certain services. In this regard, research points out that the services offered by the Social Economy satisfy demands that are unmet by commercial enterprise and includes services that are provided in a different manner (more in line with the preferences of its users), services that are not of interest to commercial enterprise or in geographical locations where the latter is not present. We are unable to verify the differences in users' profiles for each group of enterprise within the scope of this study. We can, however, verify that Social Economy enterprises and entities are more widely present in certain service activities that are socially essential and are closely linked to the concepts of sustainability and quality of life.

Care services and other social services

The care and other social services sector will face significant challenges in coming decades through the incorporation of extensive groups and the transition from a care model based on residential establishments to a community-based model characterised by users remaining in their homes. This community-based model is based on intergenerational (with spaces where all ages can participate), intersectoral (with coordination between all professionals), and reciprocity principles (where people play multiple roles, not only as cared-for people). In this context, the Social Economy plays a strategic role due to its leadership in local settings and its capacity for social innovation²⁶. A role it already seems to be playing according to the figures

Four out of ten enterprises or entities in the care and other social services sector belong to the Social Economy. And up to six out of ten, in the case of at-home care services for the elderly.

The overall figures²⁷ of the Continuous Sample of Working Lives confirm, in relative terms, the widespread presence of the Social Economy in sectors of activity that encompass the care services. The Social Economy represents approximately 41.3% of private supply in these markets (7.0% if only the market-oriented Social Economy is considered). That is, almost half the undertakings in the care and other social services are Social Economy enterprises, while its weight in the economy as a whole is of only 6.3% (Table 21).

Furthermore, it should be noted there is a majority presence of the Social Economy in non-residential services for the elderly (representing 64.4% of supply, with the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy standing at 19.2%) and in residential services for persons with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues (57.8% and 6.7% respectively).

Similarly, the Social Economy is also significantly present in other care services rendered residentially or at home and targeted at collectives other than the elderly or persons with disabilities. The Social Economy as a whole also has a majority presence in services offered residentially (57.2%) and is equally significant in non-residential services (48.2%), with children's daycare standing out. The relative presence of the market-oriented Social Economy in these activities is also much higher than its relative weight in the economy as a whole and amounts to approximately 12.0%.

As such, the productive specialisation of the Social Economy as a whole in care services targeting the elderly and disabled persons, as well as other groups of persons, is very high. This has contributed to establishing a diverse private supply in these markets.

²⁶ An analysis of the strategic role played by the Social Economy as a community-based care model in coming decades can be found in "Oportunidades estratégicas para la Economía Social asturiana en el sector de los cuidados" [Strategic opportunities for the Social Economy in Asturias in the care sector] (ASATA, 2023) and "Los cuidados desde la Economía Social" [Care from the perspective of the Social Economy] (CEPES, 2022).

²⁷ Please note that this is not comparing the sub-sample of Social Economy enterprises with the control group but with the set of (private) enterprises collected in the Continuous Sample of Working Lives (228,137, of which 160,376 are legal entities), which is representative of the national productive fabric. Comparison with the control group is abandoned here because one of the selection criteria was the equalisation of sectoral structure, which would not allow us to observe any structural differences.

Table 21. Participation of Social Economy enterprises in economic activities linked to care and other social services. Year 2021. Percentage of all enterprises in each field of activity.

	Market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy	Total Social Economy	Commercial companies (individuals and legal entities)	Total
Dependency	7,0%	41,3%	58,7%	100%
871. Residential assistance with healthcare services	2,7%	26,3%	73,7%	100%
872. Residential assistance for persons with intellectual disability, mental health and drug addiction issues	6,7%	57,8%	42,2%	100%
873. Residential assistance for the elderly and disabled people	2,6%	21,3%	78,7%	100%
881. Non-residential social service activities for the elderly	19,2%	64,4%	35,6%	100%
Other social services	11,8%	50,2%	49,8%	100%
879. Other residential assistance activities (except the elderly and disabled people)	11,7%	57,2%	42,8%	100%
889. Other non-residential social service activities (children's daycare and others))	11,9%	48,2%	51,8%	100%
Total economy	3,0%	6,3%	93,7%	100%

Source: Continuous Sample of Working LivesLives (2021) and own work..

Education services

Almost three out of ten enterprises or entities in education belong to the Social Economy. This significant contribution is consistent across all educational levels.

The Social Economy is also very present in education services: 26.0% of private supply in the education sectors comes from Social Economy enterprises or entities (10.2% in the market-oriented Social Economy), figures that are much higher than those found in the economy as a whole (Table 22).

The Social Economy represents approximately 26.2% of private supply in nursery education, 23.6% in primary education, and approximately 28.0% in secondary and higher education. The market

or business sub-sector of the Social Economy Social Economy is also very significantly present in the first three educational levels, exceeding 13%.

The Social Economy therefore contributes significantly to the existence of a wide offer at all levels of education.

Table 22. Participation of Social Economy enterprises in economic activities linked to education. Year 2021. Percentage of all enterprises in each field of activity.

	Market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy	Total Social Economy	Commercial companies (individuals and legal entities)	Total
Education	10,2%	26,0%	74,0%	100%
851. Nursery education	17,5%	26,2%	73,8%	100%
852. Primary education	14,0%	23,6%	76,4%	100%
853. Secondary education	13,1%	28,3%	71,7%	100%
854. Higher education	3,7%	28,0%	72,0%	100%
855. Other education	5,4%	25,6%	74,4%	100%
856. Ancillary activities in education	5,2%	19,1%	80,9%	100%
Total economy	3,0%	6,3%	93,7%	100,0%

Source: Continuous Sample of Professional Lives (2021) and own work.

Environmental transition

Social Economy enterprises and entities are significantly present in water management (three out of ten) and to a lesser extent, although also significant, in waste management activities.

Finally, worth noting is the contribution of the Social Economy to a wide offer in certain economic activities linked to the environmental transition. The presence of the Social Economy in energy transition activities is low or moderate but is very significant in water management (26.6% of all private enterprises and institutions in this sector belong to the Social Economy)

and, to a lesser extent, in waste management and the circular economy (3.6% are the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy enterprises) (Table 23)

Table 23. Participation of Social Economy enterprises in economic activities linked to the environmental transition. Year 2021. Percentage of all enterprises in each field of activity.

	The market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy	Total Social Economy	Commercial companies (individuals and legal entities)	Total
Environmental transition	1,8%	2,0%	98,0%	100%
Industry related to environmental transition	2,1%	2,1%	97,9%	100%
Electric energy	3,0%	3,0%	97,0%	100%
Energy efficiency in construction	1,6%	1,6%	98,4%	100%
Sustainable mobility	3,7%	3,7%	96,3%	100%
Technical services for architecture and engineering	1,3%	2,4%	97,6%	100%
Water management	2,3%	26,6%	73,4%	100,0%
Waste management / Circular economy	3,6%	5,0%	95,0%	100,0%
Research, development and innovation	2,0%	34,1%	65,9%	100%
Total economy	3,0%	6,3%	93,7%	100,0%

Fuente: Muestra Continua de Vidas Laborales (2021) y elaboración propia.

3. CONTRIBUTION TO TERRITORIAL COHESION

In the previous section, we looked at the potential contribution of the Social Economy to social cohesion. A second axis that showcases its contribution to welfare or collective utility is territorial cohesion.

The greater tendency of the Social Economy, especially The market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy Social Economy, to settle in rural environments and in medium-sized cities is where its contribution to territorial cohesion stems from. As this section will show, this contribution crystallizes in the creation of activity and employment in these areas and strengthening the

competitiveness of their economy, by incorporating larger enterprises in different sectors and developing the potential each territory has to offer

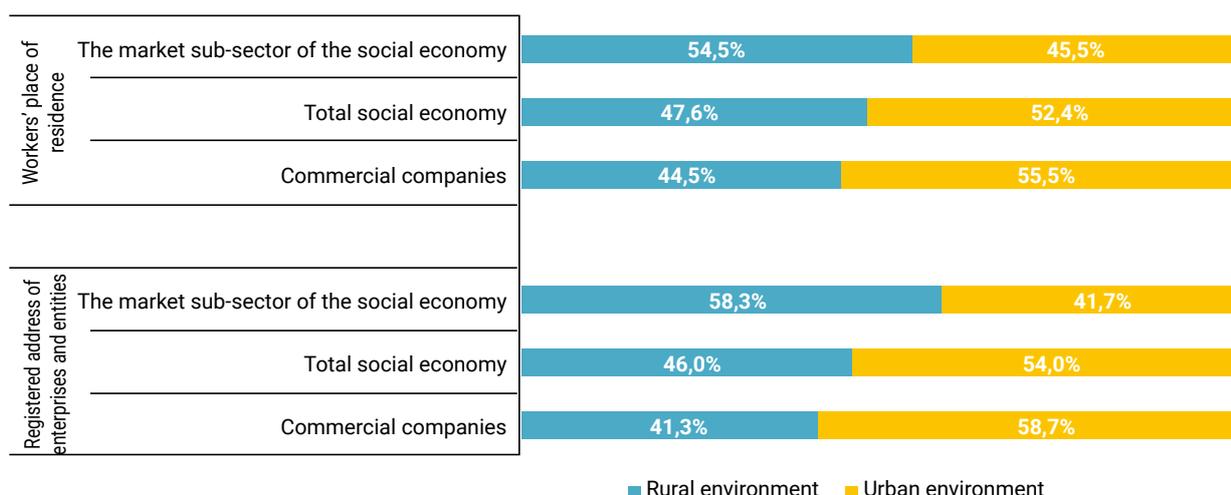
Location in rural areas and in medium-sizes cities

The market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy is mostly located in rural areas and medium-sized cities...

The market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy is mostly located in towns with a population under 40,000 people, categorised in this study as “rural areas and medium-sized cities”²⁸: **58.3% of these enterprises** are registered in a location that falls within this category, and **54.5% of their workers** live in such locations. These figures are inverted in the case of commercial companies, whose registered address and workers are mostly located in large cities (Figure 10).

If we consider the Social Economy as a whole, the percentage of entities and workers located in larger cities is closer to the figures for commercial companies, although they are still more present than the latter in rural environments.

Figure 10. Location of enterprises and place of residence of their workers by geographical environment, broken down by Social Economy and other enterprises. Year 2021. Percentage of the total.



Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Size of the rural economy

Creation of economic activity and employment

The most immediate effect of the Social Economy being present in medium-sized cities and rural environments is the creation of economic activity and employment. According to the results of the sample (Table 24), 6.9% of rural enterprises and entities belong to the Social

²⁸ In the analysis by geographical area, rural environments are usually characterised by smaller populations (populations of 20,000 and 10,000 are the two most frequently-used criteria). This study uses a population of 40,000 due to limitations in the information from Continuous Sample of Working Lives because for reasons linked to statistical secrecy, this source is unable to identify towns with smaller populations. As such, medium-sized cities and rural areas are considered jointly.

... And, thus, it contributes to the creation of economic activity and employment in these areas. This contribution is further extended in qualitative terms due to its differential contribution to inclusive job creation, which incorporates groups of people with high unemployment rates

Economy (4.1% if only the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy is considered). Similarly, 5.9% of rural employment belongs to the Social Economy as a whole (3.5% if only the market-oriented Social Economy is considered).

Furthermore, given its tendency to employ collectives with difficulties to access the labour market (as shown in the previous section), the contribution of the Social Economy to the rural economy is further extended by

its capacity to create employment for the following groups of people:

- **Disabled people.** 30.3% of disabled persons working in medium-sized cities and rural areas work in a market-oriented Social Economy Social Economy enterprise, with this percentage increasing to 34.9% if Social Economy is considered as a whole. Among workers with a disability level over 65%, this figure increases to 51.9%.
- **Older workers.** 5.8% of workers aged over 55 are employed by a Social Economy enterprise or entity (3.8% in market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy).
- **Workers age under 25.** 7.7% of young workers in rural areas and medium-sized cities work in the Social Economy.

Table 24. The importance of Social Economy in the rural economy. Relative weight of Social Economy enterprises and employment. Year 2021. Percentage of all medium-sized cities and rural areas.

	The market or business sub-sector of the social economy	Total social economy	Commercial companies	Total
Total enterprises (legal entities)	3,0%	6,3%	93,8%	100%
Rural enterprises (legal entities)	4,1%	6,9%	93,1%	100%
Total employment	2,9%	5,5%	94,5%	100%
Rural employment	3,5%	5,9%	94,1%	100%
Men	3,2%	4,6%	95,4%	100%
Women	3,9%	7,8%	92,2%	100%
Disabled people	30,3%	34,9%	65,1%	100%
Disability level between 33% and 64%	28,6%	32,8%	67,2%	100%
Disability level of 65% or over	45,9%	51,9%	48,1%	100%
Other collectives with difficulties to access employment				
Persons aged under 25	3,5%	7,7%	92,3%	100%
Persons aged 45-54	3,6%	5,7%	94,3%	100%
Persons aged 55 and over	3,8%	5,8%	94,2%	100%

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

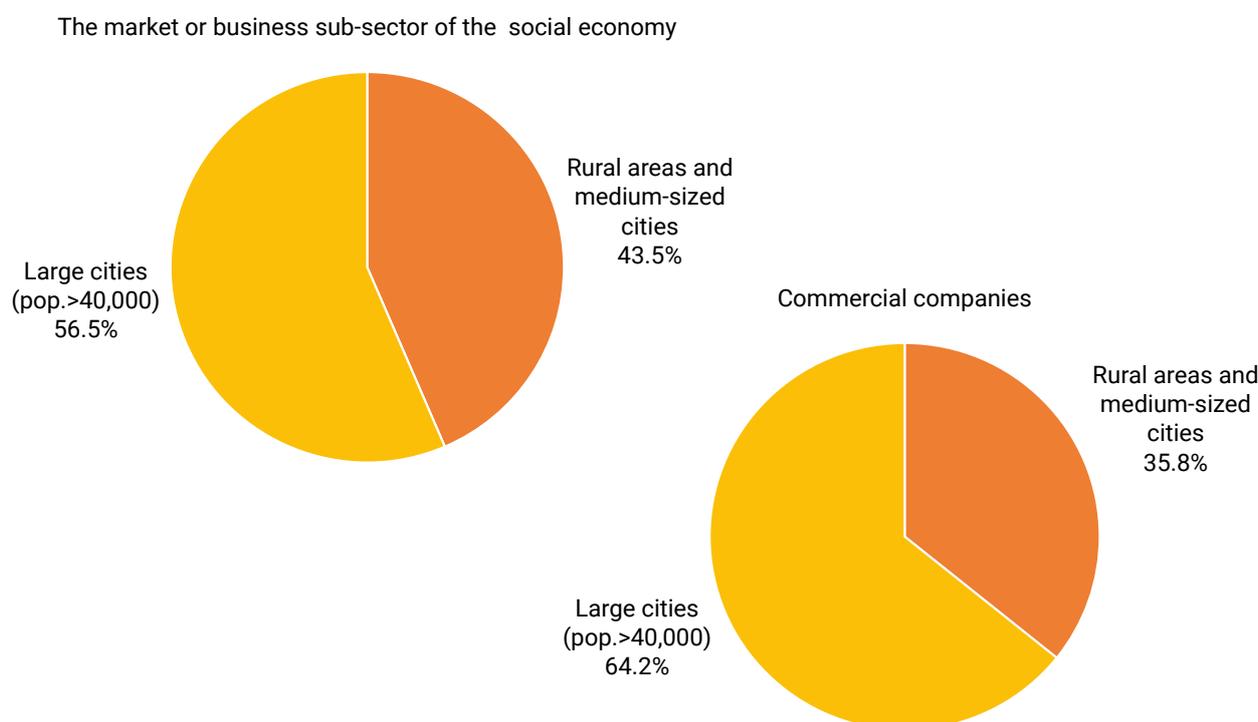
Entrepreneurship in the rural world

Another way of verifying the greater contribution of the Social Economy to medium-sized cities and rural areas is through an analysis of entrepreneurship, approached in this analysis through entities that are less than 3 years' old.

43.5% of the youngest Social Economy enterprises are located in rural areas or medium-sized cities (35.8% in the economy as whole, excluding the public sector).

Based on the results for the sample of entities obtained from the Continuous Sample of Working Lives, entrepreneurship in the Social Economy is found almost as equally in medium-sized cities and rural areas as in large cities; meanwhile, in the case of commercial companies, entrepreneurship focuses on larger cities to a greater extent. Thus, if we only consider the youngest enterprises (legal entities) -less than 3 years' old-, in the case of market-oriented Social Economy, 43.5% are located in medium-sized cities and rural areas, and 56.5% in large cities. In the case of commercial companies, these percentages are 35.8% and 64.2% respectively (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Location of young enterprises according to geographical category, broken down into market sub-sector of the Social Economy Social Economy enterprises and commercial companies. Year 2021. Percentage of the total for each group.

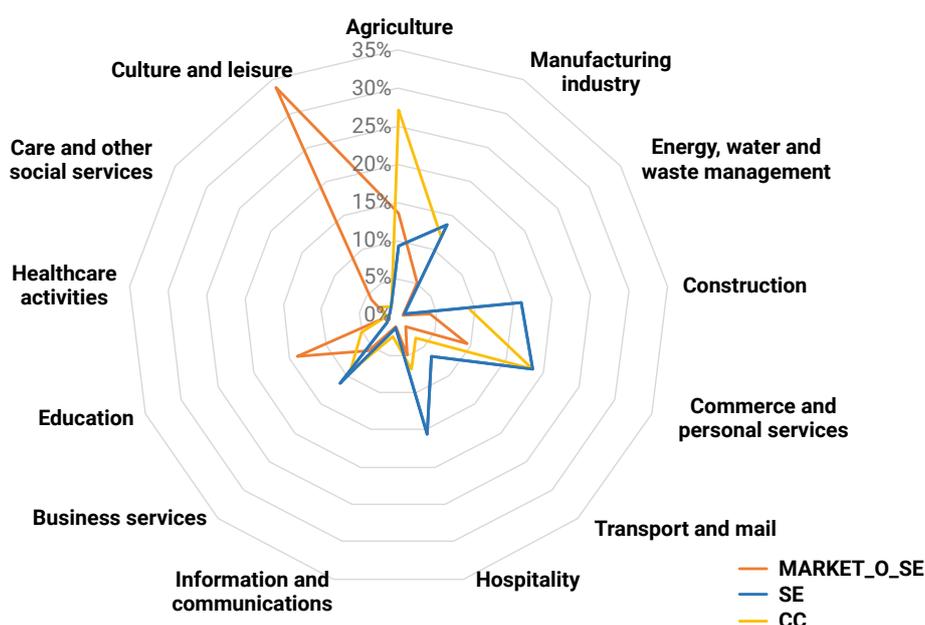


Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

There are also significant differences in regard to the sectors in which new enterprises in medium-sized cities and rural areas operate. Entrepreneurship in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy Social Economy mainly takes place in agriculture, commerce and

personal services, and in business services. An analysis of new enterprises and entities of the Social Economy as a whole shows their location is even more widespread than for commercial companies. In this case, entrepreneurship focuses on the culture and leisure services, education and, to a lesser extent, the care and social services (more than 52% of new Social Economy entities are found in these two sectors, while only 5.0% of new commercial companies are found in these sectors.) (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Distribution of young enterprises by sector of activity in market-oriented Social Economy, total Social Economy and commercial companies in medium-sized cities and rural areas. Year 2021. Percentage of the total for each group.



Source: Continuous Sample of Professional Lives (2021) and own work.

Competitiveness of the rural economy

Larger enterprises

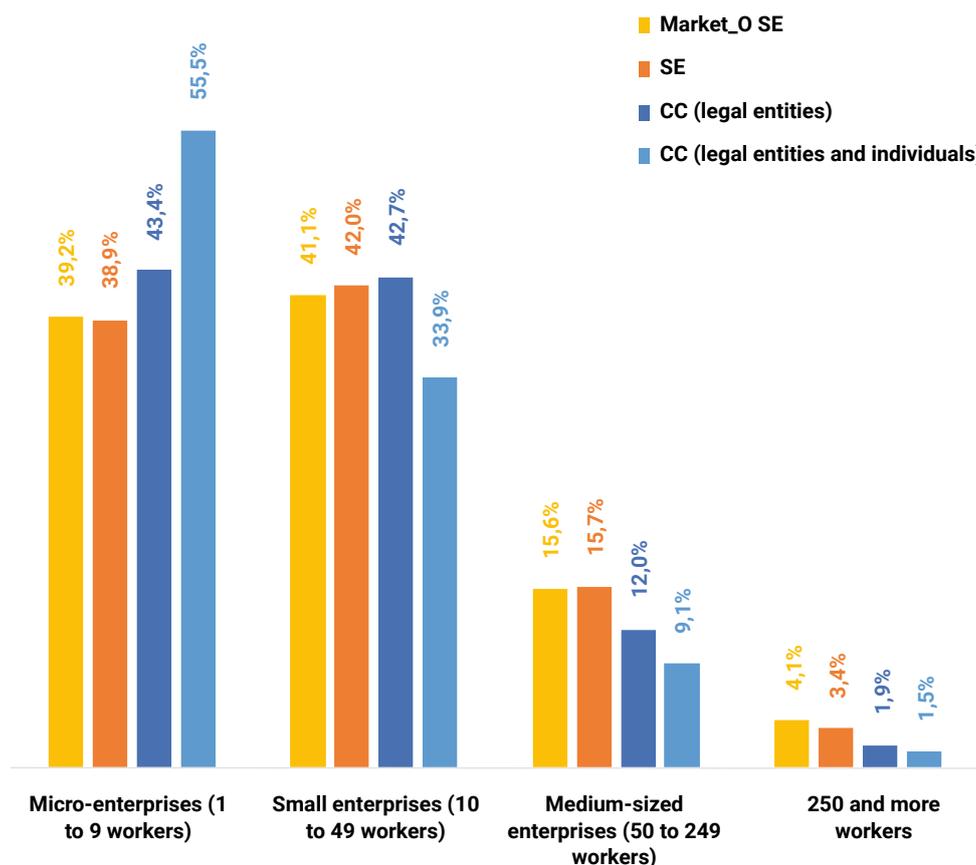
The market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy also contributes to competitiveness in rural areas and medium-sized cities, contributing more medium-sized and large companies in relative terms...

In rural areas and medium-sized cities, Social Economy enterprises, especially from the market or business sub-sector, are larger on average than commercial companies. In fact, 4.1% of enterprises with waged employees²⁹ are large undertakings compared to 1.9% of commercial companies in the area. Additionally, 15.6% are medium-sized enterprises, compared to 12.0% of commercial companies (Figure 13). The presence of medium-sized and large enterprises in the

²⁹ It should be pointed out that, as mentioned earlier, enterprises without waged workers are not part of the Continuous Sample of Working Lives, the source on which this research is based.

business sector strengthens the competitiveness of rural areas and medium-sized cities, since the prevalence of micro-enterprises and individual business owners, without waged workers, is frequently pointed out as an element that limits competitiveness in certain geographical areas (Martínez et. Al, 2009)..

Figure 13. Distribution by size ranges of enterprises with waged employees in the Social Economy and of commercial companies in medium-sized cities and rural areas. Year 2021. Percentage of the total for each group.



Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Productive diversification

... And it contributes to the diversification of local economies by being present across a wider variety of activities.

The Social Economy also adds value to rural societies through the diversification of its productive fabric, which is very important towards its competitiveness and resilience. This increased diversity, observed in the previous section in regard to new enterprise, also holds true for market-oriented Social Economy as a whole.

The sectoral distribution of Social Economy enterprises and commercial companies in medium-sized cities and rural areas

shows that the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy is more diverse and is more uniformly distributed across the business sector, proving its greater capacity to be present in different activities of the rural economy. (Table 25).

Table 25. Sectoral distribution of Social Economy enterprises and entities, and of commercial companies in medium-sized cities and rural areas. Year 2021. Percentage of total enterprises in each group.

	The market sub-sector of the social economy	Total social economy	Commercial companies (legal entities)
Agriculture	25,9%	16,4%	7,7%
Manufacturing industry	26,7%	16,0%	24,7%
Energy, water and waste management	0,8%	2,2%	0,9%
Construction	4,9%	2,9%	13,0%
Commerce and personal services	18,3%	11,5%	22,1%
Transport and mail	2,8%	1,8%	6,6%
Hospitality	2,0%	1,9%	8,9%
Telecom and information society	0,6%	0,5%	1,1%
Business services	6,4%	6,3%	8,4%
Education	7,0%	13,2%	1,8%
Healthcare activities	0,5%	1,0%	1,2%
Care and other social services	3,3%	14,2%	1,9%
Culture and leisure	0,4%	11,8%	1,3%
Other services	0,4%	0,5%	0,5%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Standard deviation	9,4	6,3	7,9

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

A productive structure that is more closely suited to the potential and needs of the rural population

Lastly, its widespread presence in sectors linked to the potential and needs of rural areas is another way of contributing to the competitiveness of local economies.

Another significant contribution of the Social Economy to the competitiveness of rural economies is channelled through the development of certain economic activities that enable making the most of the rural economy's potential or supplying social and educational services that are essential to avoiding population loss (Table 26).

A good example of the prominence of the **market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy** in the development of the productive fabric and added value of the economies in these areas is its weight in the **fields of agrifood**. Thus, 53.7% of the manufacturing of vegetable and animal oils and fat, 27.3% of the manufacturing of products for animal feed, 23.0% of drink manufacturing or 12.2% of the processing and preservation of foods and vegetables are carried out by this type of enterprise.

The Social Economy is also very significantly present in nursery education (35.7% and 24.9% in the case of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy), contributing decisively to the existence of any supply of services at this educational level, which as pointed out is a determining factor for people to decide to settle in a rural area. Furthermore, it also contributes to a more diverse supply in primary education (28.2% of the supply belongs to the Social Economy and 19.6% to the market-oriented Social Economy), secondary education (35.3% and 14.6%) and higher education (33.3% and 11.1%).

A majority of care services in medium-sized cities and rural areas belong to the Social Economy. 57.8% of non-residential social services for the elderly are offered by the Social Economy. Also, more than 45% of assistance activities in residential establishments (without healthcare) also belong to the Social Economy. Percentages in healthcare services are lower but still amount to 36.2% in the case of hospital-related activities.

As regards cultural or leisure services and sports activities, half of the private offer that exists in rural areas belongs to Social Economy enterprises and entities.

Table 26. Fields of the rural economy in which the Social Economy is a key supplier. Year 2021. Percentage of all enterprises in each field in medium-sized cities and rural areas.

	The market or business sub-sector of the social economy	Total social economy	Commercial companies (legal entities)	Total
011 Evergreen crops	16,7%	17,2%	82,8%	100%
015 Agricultural production combined with cattle-farming	17,8%	17,9%	82,1%	100%
103 Processing and preservation of fruit and vegetables	12,2%	12,2%	87,8%	100%
104 Manufacturing of vegetable and animal oils and fats	53,7%	53,7%	46,3%	100%
106 Manufacturing of milling products and starchy products	13,6%	27,3%	72,7%	100%
109 Manufacturing of animal feed products	27,3%	27,3%	72,7%	100%
110 Manufacturing of drinks	23,0%	23,0%	77,0%	100%
120 Tobacco industry	33,3%	33,3%	66,7%	100%
360 Water catchment, treatment and distribution	6,5%	49,7%	50,3%	100%
851 Nursery education	24,9%	35,7%	64,3%	100%
852 Primary education	19,6%	28,2%	71,8%	100%
853 Secondary education	14,6%	35,3%	64,7%	100%
854 Higher education	11,1%	33,3%	66,7%	100%
855 Other education	7,3%	37,5%	62,5%	100%
856 Ancillary activities to education		21,1%	78,9%	100%
861 Hospital-based activities	0,0%	36,2%	63,8%	100%
871 Assistance in residential establishments with healthcare services	2,8%	29,1%	70,9%	100%
872 Assistance in residential establishments for people with intellectual disability, mental health issues and drug addiction	4,8%	47,7%	52,3%	100%
879 Other assistance activities in residential establishments	8,0%	45,2%	54,8%	100%
881 Non-residential social services activities for the elderly	21,3%	57,8%	42,2%	100%
889 Other non-residential social services activities	15,7%	36,8%	63,2%	100%
910 Activities in libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities	5,7%	50,0%	50,0%	100%
931 Sports activities	1,4%	52,0%	48,0%	100%
Total	4,2%	6,9%	93,0%	100%

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

Keeping the population in rural areas

The positive effects of the Social Economy on local economies in rural areas crystallize in the creation of direct jobs that help keep the population in these areas. **Another characteristic of the Social Economy, job stability, also has a positive impact on people's decision to keep their residence in these areas.**

Results regarding the comparison of **professional careers of Social Economy workers** and workers of the control group living in medium-sized cities and rural areas confirm that the former are much more stable than the latter. The proportion of workers who did not lose their job in the period analysed is 67.4% compared to 35.0% in the control group. In the case of the market-oriented Social Economy, the difference is also very significant (62.3% vs. 34.2%). The average number of employment instances in each group further confirms the greater stability of employment in the Social Economy enterprises and entities (Table 27).

Also, the larger number of leaves of absence compared to the corresponding control groups also points to Social Economy and the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy enterprises making work-life balance easier for their workers.

Table 27. Professional careers of workers in medium-sized cities and rural areas in Social Economy enterprises (1) and in companies of the control group. Year 2021.

	The market or business sub-sector of the social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 1)	Total social economy	Commercial companies (Control group 2)
Sample size (no. of workers)	6.380	5.153	12.328	11.187
Average duration of the careers analysed (years)	5,4	8,1	5,5	8,0
EMPLOYMENT INSTANCES				
Persons with continuous employment experiences (% of total)	62,3%	34,2%	67,4%	35,0%
Average number of employment instances (for every 10 years)	6,0	11,7	5,7	11,3
LEAVES OF ABSENCE				
Number of leaves of absence per year for childcare or caring for other persons (per every 100,000 workers)	340	276	547	321

(1) Not including workers in integration enterprises or special employment centres.

Source: Continuous Sample of Working Lives (2021) and own work.

CHAPTER III.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE DIFFERING BEHAVIOUR OF THE MARKET OR BUSINESS SUB-SECTOR OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

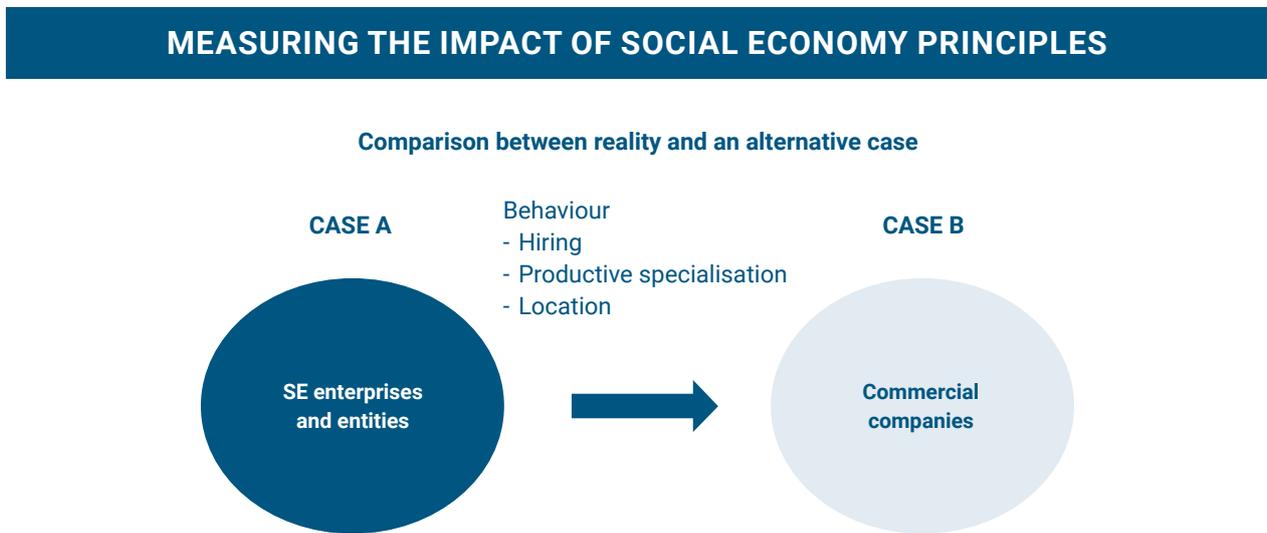
1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter identified the potential effects that Social Economy enterprises and entities may have on social and territorial cohesion, considering how they behave differently in comparison to commercial companies. This chapter will take a step further and will present a monetary assessment of the measurable effects by considering the net benefit that society as a whole obtains from the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy existing.

The assessment of the economic and social effects presented in this chapter is based on a counterfactual analysis methodology, according to which **the impact of market-oriented Social Economy is approached through a comparison of the current situation and a hypothetical situation in which the Social Economy behaves like commercial companies**³⁰. Such hypothetical change in behaviour **essentially affects three dimensions: the hiring of certain collectives who have difficulties to access the labour market, the working conditions of staff and geographical location** (Figure 14). The difference in the results obtained through this exercise and the real figures for Social Economy enterprises will offer an approximation to the impact of the effects analysed.

³⁰ Please note that this impact analysis does not set out to find “what would happen if Social Economy enterprise disappeared” but, rather, sets out to compare the current situation with an alternative (and hypothetical) situation in which the Social Economy enterprises drop their principles and start behaving like commercial companies. In this regard, this assessment does not include the contribution of the Social Economy to GDP or other economic variables but the monetary value of its values and principles

Figure 14. Methodology to measure the impact of the principles of market-oriented Social Economy.



Source: Own work.

A set of methodological premises supports the quantification and economic appraisal of the impact of Social Economy³¹. There is an important observation to be made based on these premises: **the figures presented by this study are a partial approximation to the economic value of the principles of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy**. This is because a shortfall in statistical information prevents us from verifying some of the effects that have been identified theoretically; other effects have been verified empirically, but methodological difficulties prevent us from incorporating the monetisation of their impact.

This chapter quantifies the impact of the differing behaviour of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy compared to commercial companies in two different stages. Firstly, impact is valued through counting the number of workers (number of persons who would lose their job or whose working conditions would change if market-oriented Social Economy behaved like commercial companies). Secondly, the annual monetary value of this impact is approached, differentiating between direct or indirect benefits and the economic stakeholders involved.

2. CONTRIBUTION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF THE MARKET OR BUSINESS SUB-SECTOR OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY TO SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL COHESION IN TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

The previous chapter identified some of the effects that the differing behaviour of Social Economy enterprises has on social and territorial cohesion compared to commercial companies. Specifically, in regard to the impact on social cohesion, market-oriented Social

³¹ For further details about the methodology of this assessment, see chapter 4.1 of Martínez, M. I., Castro, R. B., Santero, R. and De Diego, P. (2020).

Economy enterprises have a higher presence of certain collectives that find it difficult to access the labour market; also, they provide greater job stability and more equality in regard to wage gaps based on gender, age and disability. Similarly, another way the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy contributes to social cohesion is through specialised supply in a number of services linked to sustainability and quality of life. In the case of territorial cohesion, market-oriented Social Economy has also been shown to make decisions regarding the location of its enterprises that are more favourable to rural areas than commercial companies, thus contributing further to the creation of activity and employment in these areas.

Measuring the differences between Social Economy enterprises and commercial companies in regard to the aforementioned dimensions makes it possible to implement a simulation in which the former start to behave like the latter; that is, the average values found for the control group are implemented for the Social Economy enterprises. These differences make it possible to measure how the different behaviours arising from the principles and values of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy enterprises impact the results.

The annual results of this simulation are as follows (Table 28):

If market-oriented Social Economy started to behave just like commercial companies in their hiring policy, 181,000 jobs occupied by collectives with employability issues would be lost; 222,600 workers would lose the stability of their professional careers, and 232,000 women would suffer wider wage gaps.

1.- More than 181,000 workers belonging to groups of persons with difficulties to access the labour market³² would lose their job. Of these, 85,855 would be disabled workers, almost 4,600 persons at risk of or in a state of social exclusion, 23,819 persons aged over 55, 6,859 women aged over 45, and 60,315 low-skilled workers who were not considered in previous categories.

- 2.- Approximately 222,600 workers every year would lose the stable employment relationship they now have with the company they are working for. Of these, approximately 43,944 would be partners in market-oriented Social Economy enterprises that belong to these entities as self-employed workers, and approximately 179,000 who are waged workers.
- 3.- Female workers would take steps back in their labour achievements. In fact, approximately 232,000 female workers would suffer wider gender pay gaps compared to their male counterparts.
4. More than 2,000 workers from collectives that are commonly under-represented in top management positions would no longer hold such positions (1,491 women and 569 disabled people). And work-life balance would take a step back for the staff in general as more than 800 workers in the Social Economy would no longer take leaves of absence for childcare.
- 5.- In regard to the sectoral specialisation of the Social Economy and its wider offer in certain social or similar services, if these enterprises were distributed across the sector like the control group, there would be almost 76,820 fewer workers in care-related services and

32 This figure already takes into account that a given worker could belong to more than one of these collectives

52,745 fewer workers in educational services. This would significantly affect the level and diversity in the supply of such activities.

Table 28. Contribution of the principles of market-oriented Social Economy to social cohesion. Impact counted in number of persons.

CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIAL COHESION		No. of people
1. Employment of groups of people with difficulties to access the labor market (no. of workers who would lose their job)		181.444
Disabled workers		85.855
At-risk workers or workers in a state of social exclusion		4.595
Workers aged over 55 (without disability)		23.819
Women aged over 45 (without disability and under 55)		6.859
Low-skilled workers (not considered in previous collectives)		60.315
2. Quality of employment (no. of workers whose employment conditions would change)		
Job stability		222.587
Self-employed partner (partner in enterprise)		43.944
Waged worker (continuously employed)		178.644
Greater wages		272.442
3. Equal opportunities (no. of workers whose employment conditions would change)		
Diversity in top management and highly-qualified jobs		2.060
Women		1.491
Workers with a disability level over 33%		569
Greater ease to take leaves of absence		803
Smaller gender wage gaps		232.982
4. Supply of social and educational services (no. of workers who would stop working in these sectors)		
Services for dependency and other social services		76.820
Educational services		52.745

Source: Continuous Sample of Professional Lives (2021) and own work.

If market-oriented Social Economy enterprises decided on their location like commercial companies do, 74,000 jobs would be lost in rural areas and medium-sized cities.

Although significant effects on territorial cohesion have been identified for Social Economy enterprises linked to their more extensive relative presence in medium-sized cities and rural areas, measuring these effects has been a much more complex task. Although the Continuous Sample of Working Lives makes it possible to approach some of these effects, others would require statistical

information that is not currently available, together with new methodologies for their measurement and assessment.

It is important to present a direct impact assessment on territorial cohesion independently, counting the people who were included in the contribution to social cohesion, in order to shine a light on the contribution of the Social Economy in the rural environment. If Social Economy enterprises started to make their location decisions like commercial companies do, almost 74,000 jobs would be lost in medium-sized cities and rural areas (Table 29). However, this contribution is much higher in qualitative levels since almost 50% of these jobs would be occupied by women and 36% would be mid- or high-qualification jobs, which are both key dimensions to keeping the population in these areas. Furthermore, it should be pointed out that 11,400 jobs occupied by disabled people would be lost in these areas.

Table 29. Contribution of the principles of the Social Economy to territorial cohesion. Impact counted in number of people.

	No. of people
1. Impact on rural employment (jobs lost)	73.906
Women	33.923
Persons aged under 25	4.287
Persons aged over 55	15.890
Disabled persons	11.382
Secondary and higher qualifications	26.606
Secondary education, vocational training	14.929
Technical degrees	3.474
University graduates and post-graduates	8.204
Entrepreneurship in the rural environment	
Employment in young enterprises (less than 3 years)	1.932
2. Competitiveness of the rural economy	
Productive diversification for a better adaptation to the needs of the population	50.446
Dependence services	30.977
Education services	19.469
Productive structure more suited to potential and needs	N.A.
3. Keeping the population	
Number of people living in towns with a population under 40,000	192.157
Preservation of historical, artistic and cultural heritage linked to keeping the population	N.A.
Environmental preservation linked to keeping the population	N.A.

Source: Continuous Sample of Professional Lives 2017 and own work. Figures referring to January 2018.

Furthermore, the specialisation of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy also transfers to the rural world, especially in those sectors that are more closely linked to keeping the population, such as care services and other social services, and education. If these undertakings behaved like commercial companies, 50,446 jobs in the private market would be lost in these activities in these locations, and more than 190,000 persons linked to these towns could relocate to urban areas since they wouldn't have these essential services.

We have been unable to quantify any other impacts in terms of employment, population or any other variable that would make it possible to assess them.

3. MONETARY VALUE OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF MARKET OR BUSINESS SUB-SECTOR OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

The chapter that identifies the theoretical effects of the Social Economy also specified a series of benefits linked to each effect and classified them according to the main stakeholder who stands to benefit³³. The following stakeholders are distinguished when specifying these benefits: employees of the Social Economy enterprises and their immediate surroundings (mainly, family and friends); employers; the Public Administrations (PA), and society at large. The following assessment of benefits focuses on households (employees and their families), employers and the PA.

It should be noted in regard to the type of benefits considered, that only direct and indirect benefits are included. An assessment of intangible benefits, linked to higher levels of individual or collective wellbeing, is not addressed here as it goes beyond the scope of this study.

Direct benefits

The direct benefits of the principles and values of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy are close to 10,000 million euros per year, of which close to 7,000 million is net household income.

The assessment of direct benefits linked to the principles of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy can be summarised in the following (Table 30):

1.- **Direct net benefits** (net income generated and received by each stakeholder) linked to the contribution of this type of enterprise to society as a whole, amounts to **9,973 million euros per year**. These direct benefits represent 90.4% of the total assessment made, which as pointed out at the start of this chapter, is only partial.

2.- The generation of more inclusive employment and in medium-sized cities and rural areas has direct benefits amounting to almost 5,176 million euros annually and is the

33 Martínez et al. (2013, pp. 52-57 and 61-66) identified in detail the benefits linked to each potential effect and stakeholder; consulting this may help clarify the items quantified here for each effect

most important effect in monetary terms. The employment of disabled people represents a direct annual benefit of 1,918 million euros, and direct benefits from employing low-skilled workers amount to 1,234 million euros per year. Job creation for other workers (not included in previous categories) in medium-sized cities and rural areas generates a direct benefit of 975 million euros annually.

- 3.- The **better employment conditions in market-oriented Social Economy enterprises and entities is another important axis contributing to social cohesion**, amounting to approximately 2,607 million euros per year. In this area, the most significant contribution is linked to the **positive differences afforded by the Social Economy in regard to job stability**.
- 4.- **Generating additional and specific supply of educational services and, to a lesser extent, care services** (dependency services and social services) **is the third most-significant item as regards the monetary contribution³⁴** to the Spanish economy of the values and principles of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy. An estimate of the contribution of this item amounts to **1,724 million euros per year**, which represent 15.6% of the total contribution. This amount is distributed into wage income reaching households and the increase in income for the PA through direct taxing and social security contribution payments.
- 5.- Direct benefits linked to Social Economy enterprises providing more equal opportunities in regard to **greater diversity in top management** and **smaller gender wage gaps** exceeds 466 million euros every year.
- 6.- Considering the **distribution of direct benefits per stakeholder**, it should be noted that:
 - a.- Households receive most of this net benefit, amounting to almost 6,948 million euros per year, from net wage income (discounting income tax and workers' payments to Social Security), which represents 69.7% of the total.
 - b.- Net benefits to employers amount to approximately 369 million euros per year, including discounts to Social Security payments and other subsidies received by certain types of Social Economy entities.
 - c.- The different PA have a net direct benefit of around 2,656 million euros per year from tax income³⁵ (coming from income tax) and Social Security payments. Current rebates to certain groups of people or types of enterprise (mainly special employment centres and integration enterprises) have been discounted from this income.

34 It should be noted that in this assessment, jobs accounted for in previous items have been discounted. Thus, for instance, the employment of disabled people in ONCE and Fundación ONCE are counted in the item regarding more inclusive job creation and is not included here, even if its purpose is linked to social services

35 Income from workers' income tax has been calculated with average effective tax rates obtained from the information contained in the Continuous Sample of Working Lives, which takes into account any tax reliefs that some collectives may already enjoy.

Indirect benefits

Indirect benefits, corresponding to expenses not incurred thanks to the differing behaviour of the Social Economy enterprises, amount to 1,053 million euros per year. This amount essentially corresponds to savings in benefits linked to unemployment and other assistance benefits, and mainly falls on the public sector (692 million euros). An indirect benefit for enterprises has been calculated, amounting to approximately 361 million euros per year and corresponding to smaller costs in replacing workers linked to greater job stability.

It should be noted that the items collected here only include some of the indirect benefits identified. This amount should therefore increase when other concepts (for which there currently is not information available) can be assessed.

Total benefits

Total benefits amount to more than 11,000 million euros per year, of which the main beneficiaries are households (63.0%) and the Public Administrations (30.3%).

The total net benefits linked to the principles of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy amount to 11,026 million euros per year. Of this amount, 46.9% is linked to job creation for groups of persons with employability issues, 23.6% to better employment conditions, and 15.6% to the creation of supply in dependency and education.

Per stakeholders, the main beneficiaries of the principles of market-oriented Economy Social are households³⁶, which receive 6,948 million euros every year in net wage income (representing 63.0% of the total net benefits). Secondly, the Public Administrations, whose benefits amount to 3,348 million euros per year, which represents 30.3% of the total; and, lastly, enterprises who receive a net benefit of approximately 730 million euros per year (around 6.6%).

36 The assumption is made that these household incomes are discounting any potential “displacement effect”; that is, for instance, that these jobs could be taken by other people who do not belong to groups of people with difficulties to access the labour market, and that this wage income would go to other families, so in reality the net benefits for all households would decrease significantly. However, given the methodological approach of this study, this displacement effect is considered to be minimal or non-existent because:

- a) A large part of Social Economy jobs were created specifically to employ these groups of people (special employment centres, integration undertakings, Fundación ONCE, disability associations, etc.) and these would not exist (and, hence, could not be taken by anyone not belonging to these groups of persons) without the Social Economy enterprises. In this case, the substitution effect is zero.
- b) Another part of Social Economy jobs are closely linked to the territory and to agricultural micro-farms, areas in which the commercial enterprise has little interest (e.g. the sale of very small quantities of olive oil from smallholdings). Agricultural cooperatives are, indeed, created to be able to make these sales, which otherwise could not be made.
- c) Even if there was a substitution effect in some percentage of the jobs (for instance, a worker aged over 55 in an industrial cooperative being substituted by a worker aged 35), the result would not affect our measurement. In this case, the job taken by a person who does not belong to one of the priority groups of persons would not make a net contribution to social cohesion and, therefore, would not be included in the measured impact; in the same way as many other workers in the Social Economy are not included. It should be noted that the main aim is to measure the contribution of the Social Economy to social cohesion (based on its values) and does not include every economic contribution, which would be much higher and would include all of its jobs, regardless of the personal characteristics of each worker.

Table 30. Annual contribution to the Spanish economy of the values and principles of the market-oriented Social Economy. Impact counted in euros.

	HOUSEHOLDS	ENTERPRISES	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS	TOTAL	%
DIRECT BENEFITS	6.948.449.730	368.790.827	2.655.900.017	9.973.140.574	90,4%
A. More inclusive job creation and in the rural environment	3.770.684.750	368.790.827	1.036.239.987	5.175.715.563	46,9%
Disabled workers	1.569.323.693	364.885.077	-16.090.743	1.918.118.026	17,4%
At-risk workers or in a state of social exclusion	130.560.197	3.905.750	-36.922.795	97.543.152	0,9%
Workers aged over 55 (1)	495.835.957	n.d.	338.726.305	834.562.262	7,6%
Low-skilled workers (1)	855.158.629	n.d.	378.633.165	1.233.791.794	11,2%
Women aged over 45 (1))	150.077.804	n.d.	99.035.221	249.113.025	2,3%
Other workers in the rural environment (1)	569.728.470	N.D.	272.858.833	842.587.304	7,6%
B. Quality of employment (1)	1.741.748.989	n.d.	865.190.447	2.606.939.436	23,6%
C. More egalitarian enterprises (1)	289.931.841	n.d.	176.617.365	466.549.206	4,2%
D. Creation of supply in dependency and education (1)	1.146.084.150	n.d.	577.852.219	1.723.936.369	15,6%
INDIRECT BENEFITS	n.d.	360.900.950	692.394.801	1.053.295.752	9,6%
A. More inclusive job creation and in the rural environment	n.d.	n.d.	628.970.289	628.970.289	5,7%
B. Greater employment stability	n.d.	360.900.950	63.424.512	424.325.463	3,8%
TOTAL BENEFITS	6.948.449.730	729.691.777	3.348.294.819	11.026.436.326	100,0%

(1) Discounting benefits linked to collectives already included in previous items

Source: Own work. Figures referring to 2018.

CHAPTER IV.

MAIN RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. THE SOCIAL ECONOMY AS PART OF THE SPANISH BUSINESS SECTOR

Statistical information used in this impact analysis has also afforded an overview of the state of the Social Economy in Spain. A certain outline of its evolution can be obtained based on the main results obtained in the analysis carried out in 2019, regarding 2017 figures.

The four years between the previous analysis³⁷ and this one, 2017-2021, have been marked by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Spanish economy and its uneven impact per sectors of activity and regions. Based on these results, it could be said that in this situation the **Social Economy has performed better than commercial companies, as shown by its increased relative weight in almost all regions and in most sectors of activity**, both in the number of enterprises and entities, and in employment. Thus, in 2021, 6.3 of every 100 enterprises or institutions in the private sector of the Spanish economy belong to the Social Economy, increasing to approximately 10% in some regions (Ceuta y Melilla, Navarra, Extremadura).

The presence of the Social Economy has also increased in this period in most sectors of activity, and especially in those where it already had a greater relative weight. Thus, in care and other social services, 45.8% of jobs belong to the Social Economy; in education, 26.1%; and in culture and leisure, 21.9%.

In regard to its level of development by region, looking at a relative development benchmark per regions, we find that the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy is underdeveloped (with lower employment levels than would be expected considering its size and economic dynamics) in Baleares, Comunidad de Madrid and Cantabria. At the opposite end of the scale, it shows a high level of development in Región de Murcia, Andalucía, Navarra,

37 Martínez et al. (2020)

País Vasco and Comunidad Valenciana. With small differences, these conclusions also hold for the Social Economy as a whole.

Similarly, a development of the Social Economy by sectors of activity is also found, determining its **productive specialisation**. Social Economy is highly specialised in care and other social services, education, culture and leisure, agriculture and healthcare services

2. THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL ECONOMY

The hypothesis to verify in this study is that the principles and values shared by the Social Economy enterprises and entities translate into an organisational behaviour that is different from commercial companies, whose main objective is to maximise economic profit. This difference in behaviour affects different internal and external dimensions: mainly, how the staff and their employment conditions are set up, productive specialisation and geographical location. The latter two open up a gamut of opportunities to the market and to society, improving the supply of services linked to quality of life and sustainability, and to development in the rural environment. The difference in behaviour observed can be summarised into effects that are measurable both in monetary and employment terms and has great social and economic impact.

The impact analysis carried out here has taken the methodology implemented by Martínez et al. (2013) further to measure and assess most of the effects derived from the Social Economy principles. This methodology looks into the conceptualisation and implementation of social value (or social utility), based on a counterfactual theoretical and statistical analysis, and ends with a monetary assessment of this differential impact

Social Economy enterprises and entities behave differently

Social Economy enterprises and institutions, both market or business sub-sector and as a whole, appear to behave differently than commercial companies. This translates into a very positive contribution to society in regard to both social and territorial cohesion.

Furthermore, taking as reference the measurements carried out four years ago (Martínez et al., 2019), **the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy has further extended its contribution to social and territorial cohesion practically in all the paths identified**, as explained below.

The Social Economy contributes to inclusive growth and reduces inequalities

The **effects on social cohesion** focus on four areas: employment of collectives that have difficulty accessing the labour market, job stability, equal opportunities, offering first employment opportunities and supplying services linked to sustainability and quality of life (care services, education services and water management).

The results obtained confirm the existence of a **differing behaviour that generates social value** through the following:

- 1.- **Creation of inclusive employment.** To a much greater extent than commercial companies, the Social Economy incorporates groups of workers that have specific difficulties to access the labour market, such as women aged over 45, persons aged over 55, disabled people, persons at risk or in a state of social exclusion and low-skilled workers. For a variety of reasons, linked to an increase in the average age of workers and higher rates of integration, most of these collectives have increased their presence in staffs across the economy in the past four years, though there is still a positive difference in favour of the Social Economy compared to commercial companies similar to the difference observed in 2017.
- 2.- **Greater levels of employment stability.** The comparative analysis of professional careers clearly points towards job stability for waged workers being higher in the Social Economy than in commercial companies. Compared to 2017, differences in job stability have increased significantly, especially in regard to the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy.
- 3.- **Less wage dispersion.** Wage levels are much more equal. This lower wage dispersion is mainly due to the greater containment of salaries in top management and high-skill jobs. Furthermore, there has been an improvement in average wages (considering median wages) in the past few years for workers in the Social Economy as a whole, exceeding wages in commercial companies by almost 10%.
- 4.- **Greater levels of equality in enterprises.** The better results obtained attest to this in different dimensions: clearly narrower gender wage gaps; greater diversity in top management, with a greater incorporation of women and disabled people; or the possibility of achieving work-life balance. It should be pointed out that the Social Economy has taken significant steps towards reducing gender pay gaps and favouring the access of women to top management and high-skill positions, especially in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy.
- 5.- **Greater disposition to offer first employment opportunities** to people without prior job experience or who have had informal employment. The results for the specific analysis carried out in this report show that the creation of more inclusive employment in the Social Economy is also true for people without prior working experience and, especially, those who belong to groups of persons with lower levels of employability.
- 6.- **Extended private supply in care services, education and water management.** The productive specialisation of the Social Economy in services that improve people's quality of life, such as care services and education services, and a commitment to environmental sustainability, such as water management, guarantees a higher provision of services and greater diversity thereof. The advances made by the Social Economy in care services and in education has been significant compared to 2017, and has crystallised in an increase of its relative weight as regards the number of enterprises and employment.

The Social Economy generates activity, employment and a supply of key services in rural areas

Finally, in the sphere of territorial cohesion, the empirical analysis also confirms the greater relative presence of the Social Economy in rural areas and in medium-sized cities, and its significant contribution to creating activity and employment in these areas, and hence to the competitiveness of their economies:

- 1.- **The Social Economy is by and large located in towns with a population under 40,000, especially in the case of the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy.** These percentages are inverted in the case of commercial companies, whose undertakings and workers are mostly located in large cities.
- 2.- Where the Social Economy is located in geographical terms **has significant effect on the rural economy** as a significant part of the Social Economy is linked to it.
 - a.- The most immediate effect is the **creation of activity and employment** as the Social Economy has a greater presence there in terms of enterprises and employment. Moreover, employment in these enterprises in the rural environment has grown in the past few years, especially for disabled persons.
 - b.- The contribution of the Social Economy to medium-sized cities and rural areas is also channelled through entrepreneurship. The Social Economy has a greater concentration of younger enterprises in medium-sized cities and rural areas compared to larger cities; the opposite is true for commercial companies.
 - c.- Social Economy enterprises also show greater sectoral dispersion, favouring the **diversification of the rural economy**, which is very important for its competitiveness.
 - d.- The Social Economy **improves the competitiveness of the rural economies** by developing their economic potential and supply in care and educational services that are of vital importance to stop the population loss. A good example of the key role played by the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy in the development of the productive fabric and added value in these areas is its weight in the agrifood industries. The presence of the Social Economy is also very significant in education and care services, which decisively contribute to the existence of sufficient and diverse supply.

The impact of the Social Economy principles in terms of employment

With the aim of quantifying the impact of the principles that make the Social Economy different, the real situation is compared with an alternative and hypothetical setting in which the Social Economy enterprises “no longer follow their principles” and start behaving like commercial companies. The comparison of the real figures of the Social Economy with the alternative figures (that correspond with the commercial companies) can be quantified in both number of jobs and monetary units.

The alternative setting, in which the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy enterprises behave like commercial companies, **would be defined by changes in employment, in such a way that we can estimate the employment** that is not lost thanks to Social Economy enterprises not behaving like commercial companies. This gain is specified in terms of employment:

- **More inclusive.** More than **181,000 workers** belonging to one of the groups of persons that have difficulties to access the labour market keep their employment. Of these, 85,855 would be disabled workers, close to 60,000 low-skilled workers, 23,819 workers aged over 55, 4,595 workers under risk of social exclusion and 6,859 women aged over 45.
- **With greater levels of stability.** Every year, close to 222,587 workers who have enjoyed continuous periods of employment in the market or business sub-sector of the Social Economy would, otherwise, start experiencing one or more instances of unemployment. Of these, approximately 44,000 would be self-employed and all others, 178.644, waged workers.
- **Better wages.** A group of approximately 272,500 workers, mainly women, persons aged over 55 and disabled workers would have lower wages if they didn't work in the Social Economy.
- **More equal opportunities.** Approximately 232,982 women would experience narrower gender wage gaps compared to their male counterparts, and there would be an increase in **diversity in top management and high-qualification jobs**. A limited but qualitatively significant number of workers would not be expelled from their top management and high-qualification positions. Thus, more than 2,000 workers who are usually under-represented in the highest position within enterprises could take over those positions (close to 1,500 women and 569 disabled workers).
- **With more opportunities for achieving work-life balance.** Every year, more than 800 workers who currently enjoy leaves of absence to take care of their elders or their children, would not be able to enjoy them.
- **And the private supply of care and educational services is higher and more diverse.** Specialisation of the Social Economy maintains in the private sector close to 76,820 workers in care and other social services, and approximately 52,745 jobs in education services, which affects both the level and diversity of supply in these activities.

Significant **effects of the Social Economy on territorial cohesion** have also been identified but their measurement is much more difficult and has only been possible for a limited number of effects. The results, however, are also very relevant.

Thanks to maintaining the principles of the Social Economy, compared to an alternative setting where location decisions are made like commercial companies, **74,000 jobs are kept in rural areas** and approximately 192,000 people are stopped from relocating to urban areas. This contribution, however, is much higher in qualitative terms as almost 50% of these jobs (33,923) are taken by women, more than 26,600 by persons with middle or high qualification levels, and more than 11,300 by disabled persons. Furthermore, Social Economy specialisation in the rural environment, especially in sectors that are more closely linked to maintaining population levels, such as care and education services, makes it possible to maintain approximately 50,446 private jobs in these activities.

The impact of the principles of the Social Economy in monetary terms

Within the scope of this study, significant positive effects have been identified linked to the principles of the Social Economy that cannot be measured and/or assessed in monetary terms because of a lack of suitable methodologies or because this would be beyond the scope of this study. As a result, any estimations on the benefits of the Social Economy will be undervalued.

Notwithstanding the above, the **total benefits** (direct and indirect) contributed to society by the Social Economy principles amount to **11,023 million euros every year**, of which 46.9% are linked to the employment of collectives that have difficulties to access the labour market and 23.6% to greater job stability. With regard to stakeholders, the main beneficiaries are the households of collectives with greatest difficulties to access employment, who receive almost 7,000 million euros every year in net wage income. Secondly, the Public Administrations, whose benefit amounts to 3,348 million euros per year, and finally, enterprises who obtain a net benefit of approximately 730 million euros every year.

The **direct benefits** for society (net income generated and perceived by one stakeholder or another) linked to these enterprises and entities amount to **9,973 million euros per year**, and **indirect benefits**, which correspond to expenses not made due to the differing behaviour of Social Economy enterprises (mainly subsidies linked to unemployment and assistance) amount to approximately **1,053 million euros per year**.

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