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Public Policies Fostering the Social and Solidarity Economy in Barcelona (2016-2019)

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Acronyms

AESCAT	Social Economy Association of Catalonia (Asociación de Economía Social de Cataluña)
CCC	Catalan Confederation of Cooperatives (Confederación de Cooperativas de Cataluña)
CIRIEC	International Research Centre on Public, Social and Cooperative Economy (Centro Internacional de Investigación sobre Economía Pública, Social y Cooperativa)
COMISSIONAT	(Comisionado de Economía Social, Desarrollo Local y Política Alimentaria)
ECAS	Catalonian Social Action organizations (Federación de Entidades Catalanas de Acción Social)
FCCUC	Federation of Consumer and User Cooperatives of Catalonia (Federación de Cooperativas de Consumidores y Usuarios de Cataluña)
FCTC	Federation of Worker Cooperatives of Catalonia (Federación de Cooperativas de Trabajo Asociado de Cataluña)
FCVS	Catalonian Federation of Social Volunteering (Federación Catalana de Voluntariado Social)
FECETC	Federation of Social Work Centres of Catalonia (Federación de Centros Especiales de Empleo de Cataluña)
FESC	Solidarity Economy Fair of Catalonia (Feria de Economía Solidaria de Cataluña)
IUDESCOOP	Research Institute for Social Economy of the University of Valencia (Instituto Universitario de Investigación en Economía Social y Cooperativa - UV)
PA	Participatory area of SSE policy (Ámbito Participado de la Política de Economía Social y Solidaria)
PAM	Municipal Action Plan of Barcelona City Council (Plan de Acción Municipal de la Ciudad de Barcelona)
PIESS	Plan to boost the social and solidarity in the City of Barcelona (Plan de Impulso de la Economía Social y Solidaria de la Ciudad de Barcelona)
SSE	Social and Solidarity Economy (Economía Social y Solidaria)
XES	Solidarity Economy Network (Red de Economía Solidaria)
XMSSE	Network of Municipalities for the Social and Solidarity Economy (Red de Municipios por la Economía Social y Solidaria)

Summary

Barcelona's Pla d'impuls de l'economia social i solidària (PIESS / Plan to Boost the Social and Solidarity Economy) represents a successful new breed of social economy policy. It exhibits specific features of this type of policy: it is transversal in nature, often engages in partnerships and adopts a transformative socio-political perspective. The policy also uses mainstreaming approaches, political innovation and the institutionalization of strategy to achieve its means, and additionally, it mobilizes the local government and its public promotional body, the Comissionat.

A significant characteristic of the PIESS is its Catalan public administration which has for the first time promoted a cross-sectional policy initiative, in that, it holistically acts on SSE, not just part of it. That is, according to CIRIEC (2017), it promotes both social enterprise initiatives and social community ones. It also addresses both the market social economy and the non-market social economy, including economic activities such as ethical financing, fair trade, responsible consumption, the commons, and social currency. In fact, the new Catalan bill for SSE is comprised of the SSE market, which includes companies that operate in the market by selling goods and services, as well as non-market SSE, which obtain their resources from outside the market, for example through donations, property income and fees.

The public-community partnership approach of the PIESS has resulted in both the co-construction and co-production of this policy, fully exhibiting characteristics of the social economy. The application of this public policy partnership approach relied on three elements. First, a space for participation and dialogue of its own, referred to as a *participatory area of SSE policy (PA)*. Second, a public administration adapted to this partnership approach, along with appropriate intragovernmental and intergovernmental coordination. And third, a sector of SSE structured both on the cognitive plane (social imaginary and common identity) and on the organizational one (structures and spaces for inter-cooperation) which can be the administration's partners.

The socio-political perspective of the PIESS in relation to the SSE, which it conceives as a transforming vector and not palliative welfare, has required the government and SSE policy makers to have a systemic and comprehensive vision both of different spheres of public action and of the multiplicity of socio-economic activities that constitute "problems" and need to be addressed. The mainstreaming approach of this policy has sought, with modest results, to integrate this policy and the SSE into the other policies developed by the City Council and policies of other administrations, in order to break down silos.

The PIESS forms a complex political strategy, focused around two major general objectives, six lines of work, 24 specific objectives, 31 instruments and 124 actions. Many of these actions are public policy innovations. At the time of writing the PIESS had been implemented over a period of four years and, from an evaluative perspective, it has above all contributed to increasing public funding for the SSE, to increasing visibility and sensitivity towards the SSE both by citizens and the municipal administration, to providing a cognitive and organizational framework for the SSE, and to the establishment of a stable space for participation of the social economy in public policy.

Introduction

On 13 June 2015 the electoral coalition *Barcelona en Comú*, made up of several progressive parties won the Barcelona City Council local elections. Ada Colau, a social activist, was elected mayor. The election manifesto¹ of the winning political party contained multiple references to the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) which included cooperatives, common goods, participation and partnerships; it even included a specific section on ‘Promoting the social and solidarity economy’. When applying this election manifesto, the new mayor chose an activist from the cooperative and solidarity economy movement to lead the City Action Plan in this sector and to create an inter-agency body, the Barcelona City Council “Cooperative and Social and Solidarity Economy Commission” (hereinafter *Comissionat*), to roll out this new policy.

This unprecedented public policy did not have, until then, any internally or externally recognised government structure in Barcelona City Council. Outside of the City Council, the agents of the SSE sector itself (cooperatives, third social sector and other bodies) were scarcely recognised as members of this sector. Internally the City Council lacked an administrative and regulatory apparatus geared to this new sector: developing and implementing public measures in this new sphere was a challenge for the city bureaucracy, given its existing policy instruments, expertise and institutionalised participatory forums.

The Plan to Boost the Social and Solidarity Economy, *Pla d’impuls de l’economia social i solidària (2016-2019)*, hereinafter PIESS,² lacked precedents which could act as referents and was marked by its innovative approach in comparison with existing public policies and mechanisms. This new policy had two key elements: the first, the decisive political will of the City Council to implement an SSE policy, and the second, a substantial increase in budget allocation (around 800% between 2014 and 2016).

This policy, besides creating a new public policy space, constituted a socio-political innovation on several planes such as the approach to holistically incorporate the SSE sector, the political concept behind the policy, the basis of transformative cultural and socio-economic objectives, the way it constructs and produces policies, based on cooperative public-community consensus, the activation of new instruments to promote the social market and unique pilot proposals and finally the inclusivity and centrality of this policy in mainstream local politics.

This document is aimed at studying this public policy for promoting the SSE at local level from a dual analytical and prescriptive perspective. From the analytical perspective, it aims to identify, firstly, the basic features of the construction process of this policy, such as the vision of this socio-economic sector envisaged by its policymakers, the theoretical concept of the policy, the planning and process method, the actors involved in the ecosystem and the institutional framework of reference, and secondly, the architecture of

¹ Barcelona en Comu (2015): *Programa electoral de Barcelona en Comu elecciones municipales 2015*, https://barcelonaencomu.cat/sites/default/files/programaencomun_cast.pdf

² Ajuntament de Barcelona (2016): *Pla d’impuls de l’economia social i solidària (2016-2019)*, Ajuntament de Barcelona, Barcelona <https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/economia-social-solidaria/sites/default/files/Pla%20d%27Impuls%20ESS.pdf>

the policy, by distinguishing the different action lines and instruments articulated following an established typology. From a prescriptive perspective, in assessing this policy and the obstacles and problems identified, this paper aims to learn lessons from this policy which can act as referents for subsequent policies in other territories.

In the drafting of this study, official documents, publications linked directly to this case study have been examined, interviews of privileged witnesses and two focus groups have been set up, one comprising Barcelona City Council members and the other members of Catalanian representative bodies of the social and solidarity economy. The period analysed was 2016-19.

1 Overview of the policy for promotion of the social economy in Barcelona

1.1 *Contemplating the social and solidarity economy sector in the PIESS*

When defining the scope for action of the policy for the promotion of the social economy of the city of Barcelona (PIESS), in a broad sense, both the kind of legal entity and the activity contemplated were opted for. The vision of the social and solidarity economy was adopted, which integrates the two concepts, the social economy on the one hand and the solidarity economy on the other (see CIRIEC, 2017). With the inclusion of the latter, the importance of a social transformative dimension of this socio-economic sector was made explicit alongside the importance of economic activities external to the market.

Regarding the bodies and legal entities to be acted upon, socio-economic initiatives of the third social sector, cooperatives, mutual societies, worker-owned enterprises, work integration social enterprises, special employment centres, community economies (community allotments, childcare groups, time banks...) and the collaborative sharing economy have been considered³. Regarding the activity sector, economic activity not limited exclusively to the logic of product and service availability in the conventional market has also been considered and even broadened to products and services distributed externally to the marketplace, such as those offered by community economies of the commons collaborative economy.

Application of this broad view enabled political action to be addressed to a quantitatively larger population; an aspect which was significant for better internal consideration in local government. In this regard, the risk that some sectors of the SSE would consider themselves excluded, were minimised. Similarly, it was deemed that this approach

³ The study commissioned by the Comissionat in 2016 *L'economia social i solidària a Barcelona*, identified 4,718 initiatives belonging to the Barcelona social and solidarity economy, including 2,400 third social sector bodies (mainly associations), 1,197 worker-owned enterprises, 861 cooperatives and 260 community economy initiatives. The whole sector provides employment to more than 53,000 people and involves more than 100,000 volunteers, more than 500,000 consumer members and 113,000 friendly society members.

allowed reductionist views of the SSE inclined to see it as a merely complementary, palliative and welfare conception to be contested.

This scope-defining criterion enabled some disadvantages and challenges to be handled. The most important were: (1) those concerning the organizational dispersal of the SSE sector as a whole, an aspect which diversified and made dialogue much more complex; (2) the lack of structure and general lack of organization of community economy practices; (3) conceptual discrepancies within and between the various sectors of the SSE in relation to defining activities as belonging to the SSE or not, i.e. if they were deemed a sub-sector of the private market economy or a specific sector; and (4) the strategic discrepancies within and between the various dimensions of the SSE, significantly those referring to an explicitly social transformative strategy and one committed to the development of the social market.

1.2 Design and general aims of the PIESS

Consistent with what was set out in the election manifesto of the new City Council, the design of the SSE policy to be implemented exceeded the previously prevailing reductionist, complementary and welfare design of the role of the social economy, to take on a proactive and transformative design. In the new policy, the SSE was to constitute one of the main focuses of socio-economic and cultural change in the city, contributing to the development of the democratic quality of political action, to the inclusion of social policies, economic policies and to cultural change in respect to the City Council's vision of the public space. Accordingly, this new policy had to be included in the entire economic policy of the city, it had to promote social participation and that of the agents of the SSE in the joint diagnosis, joint construction, joint production and joint assessment of the policies, as well as promoting emerging functional initiatives with this socio-political vision.

The construction of this policy-design of this was based on group reflection at the heart of social and cooperative movements and on reference documents such as the "Barcelona SSE" Report, the "Barcelona Transformative Economies", "14 measures to foster the social and solidarity economy at the local level" of the Solidarity Economy Network of Catalonia (XES), "Transforming territories from a solidarity economy: 30 proposals for local elections on 24 May 2015" of the Alternative and Solidarity Economy Networks, "Measures for promoting the Federation of Worker Cooperatives of Catalonia", "Measures for promoting the Confederation of Cooperatives of Catalonia", "Conclusions of the International SSE-Zaragoza Meeting", "*Cahier d'esperances-Paris*" and the "Montreal Declaration 2016" of the Global Social Economy Forum.

Within the aforementioned conceptual framework, the promotional policy of the SSE raised two major general objectives: *impetus and reinforcement*, described in the PIESS itself. The aim of the SSE Impetus objective brings together awareness-raising and dissemination of the SSE to normalise the sector, to establish affinities, sympathies and greater social receptiveness and to promote the creation of new initiatives and the transformation of businesses into SSE bodies or an approximation to them. The aim for reinforcement includes measures to ratchet up SSE initiatives and their organizational and economic structure.

1.3 Incorporation of the PLESS into government policies

From the outset, SSE was incorporated as a sector for the development of the City Council's economic policy and was not conceived as a complementary sector to the conventional economy.

In the existing economic policy, the SSE was understood as a means to boost a plural transformative economy. The plural transformative economy was based on the development of policies linked to integral sustainability (individual, social and environmental). Besides the SSE, it incorporated proposals for SMEs (an intensification of corporate social responsibility⁴) and for the City Council itself (responsible public procurement and municipalization of services).

2 Building the PLESS in Barcelona

2.1 Cognitive and organizational structuring strategy for actors in the SSE

The building of a public policy space requires that it be defined and recognised, both by the public authorities and recognised by the actors themselves. Before 2015, the main characteristic of the SSE sector was its fragmentation into large 'families' (cooperatives, mutual societies, third social sector, etc.). These families lacked a common and integrating vision and had little communication among themselves.

The creation of terminology and a social imaginary specific to the SSE was considered fundamental. The participative process implemented by the PLESS made a positive contribution in this respect. The participation took the form of a multiplication of meetings and meeting spaces for people and entities involved and interested in the SSE. Drafting and dissemination by the Commission during the first stage of the PLESS of a generic document (the Barcelona SSE diagnosis) served as a pedagogical and structuring function in the sense of visualizing the popular consciousness, whilst a proactive document, the plan, constituted the central focus for guiding participation.

Within the framework of the participatory process, a huge volume of information about the SSE was flowing, a *language with specific terms* (e.g. community-public, etc...) was created, and discourse which adopted a shared vision throughout the whole sector were evolving. The building of this *common popular consciousness and of its own distinguishing marks* ended up cognitively structuring the SSE sector.

⁴ The first tenure of the Mayor's Office responsible for economic policy and the management of the economic presidency held meetings with the major employer organizations of SMEs in Catalonia (PIMEC) to share the importance of CSR implementation with them as an instrument for increasing competitiveness/improving performance and facilitating access to tendering which has gradually incorporated criteria for responsible public procurement. In parallel, the programme Responsible Businesses has been promoted via *Barcelona Activa*, in order to promote and facilitate the inclusion of Social Responsibility in the business strategy of participating enterprises, based on an action plan which will include this vision in all areas of an enterprise. This initiative has the support of the European Regional Development Fund.

On the other hand, the continuous practice of meetings and social participation, as well as the permanence of forums for discussion and gatherings contributed to the organizational structure of the SSE sector.

Four years down the road from the adoption of the PIESS, it now has its *distinguishing marks*, its acronym (SSE recognised and felt as its own), common organizational structures (the AESCAT) and joint unifying projects such as the draft legislation on the social and solidarity economy, participatory forums which make up the shared sector of the SSE policy - and the studies on the “Estrategia ciutat pel foment i l’enfortiment de l’SSE horitzó 2030” [City strategy for the promotion and reinforcement of the 2030 SSE horizon]. One of the most important qualitative outcomes of the PIESS has been precisely this, the cognitive and organizational structuring of the SSE, which has contributed to shaping this sector of public policy.

2.2 Stakeholders involved in the co-construction of the social economy policy in Barcelona

The approach of the SSE policy rolled out has been deliberately conceived as participatory. The stakeholders involved in the partner process of construction of the policy come from four areas: (1) from the *Social and solidarity economy sector*. On the one hand, from representative bodies of social and business initiatives: Confederation of Cooperatives of Catalonia, Federation of Worker Cooperatives of Catalonia, Federation of Mutual Societies of Catalonia, Solidarity Economy Network of Catalonia and Third Social Sector Committee among others. On the other hand, from the grass-roots organizations themselves linked to earlier representative organizations (in which 143 persons participated); (2) from the *commons collaborative economy sector*, with the participation of *BarCola* and the Collaborative Node of the commons collaborative economy; (3) from *Citizen engagement*, channelled through the Municipal Action Plan, which contributed towards more than 300 proposals, and a series of talks in which more than 400 persons took part; (4) from *City Council Areas*, such as Employment, Economy and Strategic Planning, Business, Culture and Innovation, Social Rights, Citizens’ Rights, Participation and Transparency, Environment, Mobility and Urban Planning.

2.3 The Participatory Area of the SSE policy as a co-construction space for public policy

One innovation in public policy which the PIESS is going to develop is the *Participatory Area of the SSE policy (PA)*. It is a forum for discussion and co-construction between the SSE stakeholders and those responsible for public administration. It is, in fact, an informal consultative and joint decision-making body on matters of public policy on the social and solidarity economy, in the absence of a formal body.

To contextualise, this Participatory Area was the testing ground for studies and numerous meetings held previously by SSE organizations such as the XES – Solidarity Economy Network of Catalonia and the FCTC – Federation of Worker Cooperatives of Catalonia,

as well as thematic meetings within the framework of the PAM – Municipal Action Plan – of Barcelona City Council. This participatory study was the social and cultural spawning ground of the SSE and policy in this sector.

The development of this emerging Participatory Area is undertaken with the impetus division of the Commission. In order to implement the SSE-public partner policy approach, the Commission carried out prolific participatory activity (more than 300 meetings in two years): firstly, bilateral meetings with each and every representative agency of the different SSE organizations and enterprise types; secondly, bilateral meetings with the various city groups; thirdly, with civil society in general, within the framework of said PAM meetings and also of the series of talks and conferences, which saw involvement from more than 400 persons; and lastly, experts, mostly in relation to public policy, who contributed to improving the proposals of the PISS were also involved. These opportunities for bilateral dialogue have evolved over time into multilateral ones and become more regular, shaping the PA.

The importance of this PA goes beyond the mere production of an impetus programme or strategy for the sector with public policy measures, setting out the interests of the various agents of the SSE sector. This PA, as outlined in the previous section, has contributed to structuring the SSE itself in terms of its cognitive functions and its organization.

The existing institutional participation bodies, such as the Social Economy Committee, in the sector of *Barcelona Activa*, revealed its shortcomings and inadequacies, both in the sphere of dialogue and in the functionality of the methodological and conceptual proposal underlying the SSE in the PISS. A transition process of the Committee was activated for it to be included in the new Participatory Area.

Similarly, during this period (2016-2019), participation was limited to the Barcelona SSE internal stakeholders, tasked with structuring the SSE sector. It was not yet deemed appropriate to include other social stakeholders in the process such as trade unions and other social organizations.

2.4 Leadership and pragmatism of a “stakeholder” Comissionat

The type of leadership and pragmatism of this social economy policy have also been decisive elements for its success.

The *Comissionat* for the Cooperative, Social and Solidarity Economy of Barcelona City Council has been established as a driving force and catalyst for the social economy policy. The City Council chose an SSE activist to lead this newly created policy, a person external to the public administration apparatus and political parties. This element aims to facilitate participation of the SSE in the drafting of the SSE policy and internalization of the sector inside the government fabric (Chaves, 2008). The activist and selected team possess the abilities required to energise and catalyse this policy: personal capacity, open to dialogue, and are knowledgeable on the SSE. They are provided with a team and human resources

on, in the City Council on the one hand and the *Barcelona Activa* city entity, devoted to employment and local development on the other hand.

With a pragmatic vision and to maximize efficiency, the choice is made to start by working on a working document. This document would then integrate the contributions and interests of the SSE actors. It would also incorporate contributions from other actors. Another general document offered an overall vision of this SSE sector, the diagnosis of the Barcelona SSE, drafted by outside experts. Similarly, the time schedule for the participatory drafting of the PIESS will not last long (approximately six months), at the risk of reducing efficiency and wasting valuable time.

3 The SSE policy ecosystem

The ecosystem of the SSE in Barcelona has a wide range of public and private enterprises for the support and promotion of economic and political development. There are, on the one hand, regional and local public administrations, and on the other, private bodies such as the representative organizations of the SSE, foundations, and others.

3.1 Public administrations

At the regional level, in compliance with a statutory mandate since the eighties by subsidising various lines of action, the *Generalitat de Catalunya*, the Catalan Regional Government, has supported and promoted cooperatives and in general the social economy. In the period between 2016 and 2019, the main actions financed are the projects Aracoop, the Cooperative Athenaeums and other singular projects.

At the supra-municipal level, the Barcelona County Council has a Technical Strategy Office for Economic Development (OTEDE) which conducts studies and meetings of interest to the SSE. A Network of Municipalities of the SSE (XMSSE) also exists as a discussion forum and for intermunicipal relations in this sector.

At the local level, Barcelona City Council has a Commissionat for the Cooperative, Social and Solidarity Economy plus the organization *Barcelona Activa*, which have rolled out the Impetus Plan of the Social and Solidarity Economy.

3.2 Representative bodies of the SSE

The representative bodies of the various families of the Catalanian SSE have their headquarters in the city of Barcelona. These organizations not only carry out representative functions and political activities, but also frequently provide services to companies and member organizations. The representative bodies are the Catalanian Confederation of Cooperatives, the Federation of Worker Cooperatives of Catalonia, the Federation of Consumer and User Cooperatives of Catalonia, the Federation of Housing Cooperatives of Catalonia, the Federation of Mutual Societies of Catalonia, the Solidarity Economy Network, Third Social Sector Committee, the Business Confederation of the Third Social Sector, Federation of Intellectual Disability Organizations of Catalonia, the

Federation of Work Integration Agencies in Catalonia and the Association for the Social Economy of Catalonia.

3.3 Private supporting agencies for the SSE and universities

The Barcelona SSE has the support of several private bodies such as: (1) the *foundations* Roca i Galés and Espriu, specializing in the dissemination and publication of studies and the organizations of events and workshops on cooperativism and the SSE; (2) *business cooperative groups* such as The Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education (Clade), TEB, Ecos, Gedi, Plegats, Entrem-hi and Uni.Co, whose main aims are to share services and facilities and to develop collaborative projects among the member cooperatives that facilitate their economic development and consolidation; (3) *large organizations*, such as Suara, Abacus and SCIAS (Health Facility Cooperative Society), which provide their services and facilities to the SSE of the city; (4) *public universities* also support the SSE in Barcelona, such as the University of Barcelona, the Autonomous University of Barcelona and Mataró Polytechnic, and *private* ones, such as ESADE and Pere Tarrés, offering specialised education, including postgraduate university education, undertake research and dissemination of information on cooperativism, the third sector and the SSE in general.

4 Institutional framework of the social economy and its promotion policies

The legal-institutional framework of the social economy and its promotion policies in Catalonia is highly complex, similar to other Spanish regions. Despite the growing importance and interest in European institutions on the social economy (CIRIEC, 2013, 2017, 2019), in practice, almost all the institutional network which has an impact on the Barcelona's SSE is in state hands and at the Catalan regional level.

4.1 A support system for the social economy

State level

The Spanish Constitution of 1978 has several articles which make reference to the social economy sector and its promotion. The most pertinent section is 129.2, which establishes that “The public authorities shall efficiently promote the various forms of participation in enterprises and shall encourage cooperative societies by means of appropriate legislation. They shall also establish means to facilitate access by workers to ownership of the means of production”.

Within this framework in 2011, Law 5/2011 for social economy was passed. In it, the social economy sector is regulated, which includes cooperatives, mutual societies, associations with economic activity, special employment centres, worker-owned enterprises, among other legal forms. It is a sector which is very similar to the one defined by the PIESS (see Section 2.1.), however the PIESS also comprises community and commons collaborative economies. This Law includes several sections about a promotion policy for this sector which, however, were not implemented due to the political

prioritization of applying austerity policies (Chaves and Savall, 2013). In 2015 two important regulations were passed at state level. Firstly, Law 31/2015, modifying previous Law 5/2011 and the adoption of new measures to promote and foster the Social Economy, amongst which worth highlighting are the declaration of organizations which provide Services of General Economic Interest, Special Employment Centres and Work Integration Social Enterprises, in the sector of public service procurement. These regulations were to be the main precedent to Law 9/2017 of 8 November for public sector contracts, of limited validity for the period of the development of the Impetus Plan for the Barcelona SSE being analysed here (2016-2019). The second regulatory package affects the third social sector, they are Law 43/2015 pursuant to the third sector for social action and Royal Decree 536/2013, governing the distribution of funds arising from 0.7% of income tax aimed at activities of social interest.

The state regulates some specific forms of social economy enterprises, such as worker-owned enterprises, social-initiative special employment centres and work integration social enterprises. All of these regulations include precepts of public promotion policies. Worker-owned enterprises and shared capital companies in which the workers are the majority shareholders, have existed in Spain since the late seventies. After two legal changes, they are currently governed by Law 44/2015, of 14 October, pursuant to Worker-owned Enterprises and Joint Stock Companies. The *Special Employment Centres of the social initiative are organizations aimed at socio-occupational integration of disabled persons*. Royal Legislative Decree 1/2013, modifying the regulation of the rights of disabled persons and their social inclusion, sets out in Sec. 43.4. *this legal concept, conceiving it as organizations promoted and with a shareholding of more than 50 per cent, directly or indirectly, by one or various entities, whether public or private, non-profit and whose social nature is recognized in its Articles of Association, whether they are associations, foundations, public law corporations, social cooperatives or other organisations pertaining to the social economy*". Finally, *work integration social enterprises, aimed at socio-occupational integration for vulnerable groups excluded from the labour market, are governed by Law 44/2007, pursuant to the regulation of work integration social enterprises*.

Catalonian regional level

Catalonia also has a regional constitution, the 2006 Statute of Autonomy. This also contains several sections explicitly governing the social economy sector and urging public authorities (at all levels) to promote it. In Sec.45.5 the Statute sets out an explicit mandate for promoting the social economy: "The Government should encourage the development of business and entrepreneurship taking into account corporate social responsibility, free enterprise and competition conditions, and shall protect in particular the productive economy and the activity of self-employed entrepreneurs, and of small and medium enterprises. The Generalitat must foster the action of cooperatives and labour firms and must stimulate the social economy initiatives". Likewise, Sec. 124.2 sets out that it is not the state government but the regional government which is competent in this sector: "The Generalitat has exclusive competence in the development and management of the social economy sector".

Other sections of the Statute govern the internal groups of the social economy, such as cooperatives, the third social sector and mutual societies, promote the involvement of these *organizations* in the drafting, application and evaluation of public policies and also set out an explicit mandate for supporting them. Specifically, in relation to the third social

sector, Sec. 24.4. establishes “Third sector entities have the right to fulfil their functions in the participation and social collaboration fields” and Sec. 45.7. states “Associative entities of the third sector should be consulted in the definition of public policies that affect them”. In relation to cooperatives, Sec. 24. establishes that “The Generalitat has exclusive jurisdiction over cooperatives. This jurisdiction includes the cooperative movement regulation and promotion, especially to promote all forms of participation in the enterprises, workers access to the means of production and social and territorial cohesion”. As far as mutual societies are concerned, Sec. 126.1 establishes that “The *Generalitat* has exclusive jurisdiction over the structure, organization and functioning of social welfare mutuals not integrated into the public social security system”. Finally, also to be highlighted is Sec. 43. On promoting participation: “Government must promote social participation in the development, delivery and evaluation of public policies and individual and associative participation in civic, social, cultural, economic and political fields, in full respect of the principles of pluralism, free initiative and autonomy”.

Catalonia regulates the legal forms of the social and solidarity economy, as well as its promotion by the public authorities: cooperatives, Law 12/2015, of 9 July, pursuant to Catalan cooperatives, associations, governed by Sec. 321.1 of Law 4/2008, of the third book of the Civil Code of Catalonia and foundations, governed by Sec. 331.1 of the same Law 4/2008. Foundations and associations deemed to be public amenities have specific regulations, Law 21/2014.

The whole of the Catalan social and solidarity economy does not yet have a framework law to regulate this socio-economic sector or promotion policies. However, a draft law on the social and solidarity economy is currently being drawn up, with the participation of leading Catalan SSE entities. It is envisaged that this law will be passed in the second semester of 2020. Also, in the drafting stage is a Decree of the Catalan *Generalitat* relating to social enterprises, which includes their definition, and their evaluation using indicators and their prioritization of agency collaboration with the public administrations and recipients of public grants.

Local level

Finally, at the municipal level, Barcelona City Council passed a Mayoral Decree S1/D/2017-1271 of 24 April, on sustainable public procurement measures, which lays out a section on “Subcontracting with social economy enterprises”. Barcelona County Council also passed an internal regulation on strategic public procurement.

4.2 *PIESS as a long-term strategy for promoting the SSE*

The long-term strategy for promoting the social economy rolled out by Barcelona City Council is the *Impetus Plan for the Social and Solidarity economy (2016-2019)*, which is the subject of study of this report. The PIESS is centred around two general objectives, 6 lines of work, 24 specific objectives, 31 instruments, 124 actions and evaluation indicators.

The general objectives set out the two strategic focuses that any measure envisaged in the Plan must be aimed at: promotion and reinforcement. The six lines of work make up the core topics which underpin the strategy of the Impetus Plan: (1) Mentoring and training, (2) Funding, (3) Cooperation, (4) Communication and reporting, (5) Facilities and

resources, and 6. Territorialization and community action. The 24 specific objectives refer to the goals to be reached for each line of work. The 31 actions define the intervention strategy, which are realized in concrete actions which must be executed in the period 2016-2019. Finally, the follow-up and evaluation elements have been planned for the Impetus Plan.

Together with this main promotion of the social and solidarity economy strategy, there are other wide-ranging sectorial and territorial strategies, with which the Impetus Plan is aligned, and which include details on the involvement and support for the social economy. Two should be highlighted, the Neighbourhoods Plan and the *Barcelona Activa* Development Plans.

The City Council Neighbourhoods Plan (2016-2019) is a municipal plan which contemplates multiple objectives linked to the needs of the city of Barcelona's neighbourhoods. Designed as a municipal initiative with the involvement of the citizens in the local neighbourhoods, it sets out social, economic and urban actions, with multiple objectives which aspire to transform key issues across the areas of education, social rights, economic activity and urban environmentalism.

Secondly, there are the *Barcelona Activa* Development Plans, the agency for economic and local development of Barcelona City Council. Amongst the ten strategic lines of action of this public organization are to be found: "4. Facilitation of the plural economy, promoting social and solidarity economy, collective entrepreneurship and social innovation". *Barcelona Activa* is rolling out these strategic lines of action using Economic Development Plans in the larger districts of the city, such as Ciutat Vella, Nou Barris, Sant Andreu, Sants-Montjuic, Sant Marti and d'Horta-Guinardó.

5 Architecture of the social economy policy: Instruments

Here we shall now present the various instruments built into the PIESS, distinguishing (1) the financial support instruments, such as the budgets and public, private and public/private funding mechanisms, (2) cognitive support instruments, such as the awareness and dissemination instruments, reports and statistics as well as the training activities, (3) technical support, assessment and innovation support instruments, (4) support instruments for access to public markets, such as public procurement and the social market, (5) singular and referential instruments, and finally, (6) support instruments for the creation and development of share and equity capital, such as networks of entities and shared facilities.

5.1 Financial support instruments

The PIESS contemplated three lines of action relating to funding: (1) to improve conditions for accessing it using SSE initiatives, (2) to promote tools for a new financial culture and 3) to increase knowledge about ethical financing among citizens.

The budget implemented for this up to 2018 exceeded €3.8 million. These actions, grants and other co-financing formulas played a very important role in the funding of SSE projects.

Regarding the improvement of conditions for access to funding, until 2018 the budget implemented reached more than €3.2 million and enabled 409 projects to be funded via calls to finance subsidies using competitive tendering. Of particular relevance are the specific subsidies for SSE organizations of the “Enfortim l’ESS”, which were to finance 297 projects between 2017 and 2018; “Impulsem el que fas”, which financed 52 projects and used a modality for community and collaborative economies; and the 18 enterprises or projects funded using the Fons de Crèdit Municipal in an agreement with the ethical financing bodies Coop57 and Fiare Banca Ètica, a joint fund of €2 million designed to cover possible arrears.

With the remit of promoting tools for a new funding culture, it is noteworthy to mention a matching funding campaign called “Conjuntament”, organized with the Fundació Goteo, which enabled 22 projects to be consolidated using €231,336, in equal shares from crowdfunding and the City Council. Likewise, reference must be made to the economic support of Financoop – IV International Workshop on Funding Cooperatives, as well as the study on possible exemptions and allowances for the SSE which could be included in city tax regulations.

In respect to the course of action concerning increased access to ethical funding for citizens and other activity sectors, the main project was agreed with FETS; Ethical and Solidarity Financing to publish a catalogue of ethical funding, create an app and organize the Ethical and Solidarity Insurance Forum.

Finally, we must not forget that, for the first time, the city hall used credit cooperatives banking operations *Fiare* and *Caja de Ingenieros* to cover part of their funding requirements. However, a major part of the municipal banking operations carried out with ethical funding and cooperatives is still relatively small, which is due mainly to the inability of organizations in the sector to cover the municipal funding requirement. It should be highlighted that 55% of current borrowing from Barcelona City Council is placed outside the traditional banking sector, thanks in part to the operations terminated with the European Investment Bank and partly because of the above-mentioned ethical funding institutions and cooperatives.

5.2 Cognitive support instruments

The PIESS measures which may be deemed cognitive support instruments were numerous: (1) training and backing SSE organizations and enterprises with integral cooperative management; (2) promoting cooperativism among young people; (3) boosting and supporting fairs, meetings and workshops; (4) establishing citizen rapport with the SSE; (5) promoting and strengthening the communicative capacity in the sector; (6) carrying out awareness-raising activities to highlight it; (7) producing studies to understand it better; training City Council workers in the SSE; and (8) creating and managing communication for the SSE.

The first line of work in the field of cognitive support comprised providing tools and training resources to SSE entrepreneurs, companies and organizations. The Commissionat devoted €265,362 to this up to 2018.

Amongst the training projects undertaken were “Construïm en femení”, a programme tailored to collective entrepreneurship, with a mainstream perspective aimed at women; La Comunicadora, aimed at those considering collective enterprises in the field of the commons collaborative economies; as well as training programmes “En prenem cura” (in the care sector) and “Marina dona empenta” (in the textile sector), which arose as a result of territorial diagnoses aimed at socially vulnerable people As well as Camí a la Solidesa. The latter programme consisted of training and backing SSE organizations managed and/or led by women and is set within the political mandate of the City Council to combat the feminization of poverty. Finally, another good practice is the tailor-made programme for the economic reinforcement of associations.

Between 2016 and 2018, 1,516 people attended SSE training programmes in workshops, clips and exchange sessions, all of which were promoted by *Barcelona Activa*. Later in 2019 there were 2,000 stable training places in the SSE.

The second line of cognitive support was the promotion of cooperativism amongst young people. Four actions and specific programmes were conducted in formal and informal educational facilities in which 367 young people took part.

The third line of cognitive support was the promotion and support of fairs, forums and workshops. Until 2018 investment in this line amounted to €861,758. Beside economic support for events such as annual editions of the Solidarity Economy Fair of Catalonia (FESC) which is organised by Solidarity Economy Network of Catalonia (XES), and the editions of the Festival of Time Banks, the current star due to its impact and because it is a specific action of the Comissionat has been, without a doubt, the creation and consolidation of the Responsible Consumption and Social and Solidarity Economy Fair, which takes place every year in Catalonia Square during the Christmas holidays. In the four editions held between 2015 and 2018, it is estimated that some 250 organizations have taken part, 160,000 people have attended them, and 43,000 products have been sold. The aim of the fair is to show citizens that it is possible to consume responsibly whilst also highlighting the contribution and activities of the local SSE in Barcelona.

Furthermore, several sectorial workshops and forums have been hosted, which include the Forum for the Co-creation of Public Policies (editions 2016 and 2017; attendance 600), the We do Ethical Banking workshop (2017; attendance 100), the Ethical Finances International Forum (2018; attendance 100) and the Sharing Cities Summit (2018; attendance 350 from 50 cities) at which the Declaration of Citizens’ Sovereignty for the sharing economy was signed. Finally, it is also worth mentioning the international workshop held on ethical insurance and the promotion of the EthSI mark on these types of SSE-related insurance products.

The fourth line consisted of building a shared story on the SSE to reinforce its identity and dissemination; €255,549 was set aside for this task in 2018. The main projects comprised of the publication and dissemination of materials and handbooks for raising awareness of the SSE, the Collaborative Consumption Handbook, the publication of videos, the introduction of the SSE into conventional media and the inclusion of the Comissionat advertising campaign in the media on the SSE, as well as inclusion of the debate within the sector itself on the desirability of creating a social and solidarity economy observatory.

The fifth line of action was an attempt to reinforce the communicative capacity of the SSE. Up to 2018, €56,475 had been invested in this. The main projects were the support

for the cooperativism journal *Nexe* and the organization of two workshops on “how to communicate about the other economies”, one of which was held at Biz Barcelona, the entrepreneurship fair which the Barcelona Trade Fair organizes every year.

The sixth line of cognitive support comprised a range of actions to make the SSE more visible. Up to 2018, €24,870 had been spent, in particular, on collaboration with the Goteo Foundation for a campaign aimed at the citizenry (Conjuntament programme), an agreement with *Aurea Digital* to create a map of the SSE, the production of a play which would be accompanied by a discussion forum, and the citizen awareness campaign “Join the SSE”.

The seventh line of action was the commissioning of research. The first to be granted by the Comissionat was a diagnosis of the sector and it was entitled *The Social and Solidarity Economy in Barcelona* (2016).

In addition, research on various other topics was carried out. Amongst these, we can cite the research about responsible consumer groups, shared childcare groups, the possibility of setting up municipal public services cooperatives, exploring potential economic sectors (energy and maritime), youth cooperative projects and pupil cooperatives, and the definition of the framework of the project called “Mountain Axis”, *Eix Muntanya*, a project which began in 2018 and is aimed at promoting a wide range of already existing agro-environmental initiatives located in the “upland neighbourhoods” of the city, with a dimension of promoting environmental transition.

The eighth line was devoted to generating and managing their internal communication instruments (web, social networks, bulletin, etc.) which was to draw attention to municipal SSE policy, which had an executed budget up to 2018 of €123,063.

Finally, up to 2018, €75,287 had been allocated to training in SSE to City Council employees and dependent bodies such as *Barcelona Activa* and youth employment trainers.

5.3 Technical support instruments

Consultancy and mentoring actions for improving the social and entrepreneurial viability of SSE enterprises and organizations (SSEOs) had an allocated budget of approximately €500,000 up to 2018. It should be noted that large support programmes for entrepreneurship and SSE enterprises, such as *Construïm en Femení*, *Camí de Solidesa* or *Comunicadora* undertake both training and consultancy work. We have dealt with them in the previous section as cognitive support instruments, and as such from a budgetary standpoint we have accounted for them, but we could certainly also deem them as technical support instruments.

The main technical support projects were the line of subsidies “*Enfortim l’SSE*”, devoted to promoting and consolidating the SSE; specialist consultancy points aimed at entrepreneurs and SSEOs which are scattered throughout the districts of the city; publication of the *Handbook for turning trading companies into cooperatives*; support for La Pionera, an initiative of the *Fundació Formació i Treball* which provides work integration opportunities to creative, artistic groups and those with difficulties accessing the labour market; and the creation of *La InnoBAdora*, an incubation community for SSE projects located at the *InnoBA* municipal facility. *La InnoBAdora* is currently running more than fifteen initiatives, and is one of the leading initiative mentoring resources

searching collaboration with other SSE initiatives to share knowledge, resources and services, for the promotion of SSE values and practices.

In addition, abundant resources were allocated to developing the so-called integral cooperative system for socio-economic intervention, later known as *DaliSSE*. It is an intervention model for meeting the social and economic needs (not just employment) of vulnerable groups by means of active participation both in the design and management of the intervention. Making use of several projects and learning from other international experiments, the model was conceived, and its application was supported in further pilot projects in Barcelona. Thus, emerged the cooperatives *Alencop*, in waste collection and treatment, and *Diomcoop*, in the textile sector. Both cooperatives consist of people from vulnerable groups. *Alencop* employs almost thirty people, and *Diomcoop* employs approximately fifteen people. These two pilot projects had funding of almost €2 million, provided by several City Council departments.

In total, from 2016 to 2018, *Barcelona Activa* advised 606 persons and 181 organizations, which put forward 490 SSE ideas or projects. It has been calculated that the percentage of SSE organizations receiving advice or training from *Barcelona Activa* during the period increased from 4% to 8%.

Likewise, it is worth highlighting that half of those taking part in actions and services by *Barcelona Activa* relating to the SSE did so for the first time, which shows their outreach to new communities and the existence of a growing interest in the SSE. It also suggests the success of the new approach and of the new training programmes on offer by *Barcelona Activa*, which doubled the backing provided for SSE projects in areas of communication, management and internal democracy.

5.4 Access to public markets support instruments

Of course, many of the Comissionat actions that we have considered as financial, cognitive and technical support to SSE enterprises and organizations improve the ability of these to access public markets. But in this section, we shall limit ourselves to the demand side, that is, to the measures taken by the Comissionat to foster responsible public procurement and purchasing, in the form of social and market reservation clauses.

Up until 2018, the Comissionat budget allocated for this purpose was €62,206, and the main projects comprised approval of the SSE enterprise subcontracting clause and follow-up of its implementation (said clause was included in 251 municipal tenders); the promotion of a municipal norm that reserves service tenders for SSE entities; the creation of an online directory of SSE enterprises; advice for other tendering units and awarded companies; active participation in several follow-up commissions of the municipal tender; and international research on social, environmental and good governance accreditation systems.

5.5 Singular and reference instruments

Included in this section are the singular and reference actions of the PIESS which do not fit in the other types of support instruments. Therefore, we omit here any actions such as support for the development of the *DaliSSE* model, the matching funding campaign or the training and mentoring programmes “*Construïm en Femení*” and *La Comunificadora*,

which also constitute clear examples of singular and reference projects, but which have been covered above.

The singular and reference instruments dealt with in this section are workshops which have been very important, the promotion of social and solidarity economy networks, the creation of reference SSE facilities and the social currency pilot project, *REC*, linked to the *B-Mincome* programme.

During this period, the Commissioner's Office organized and/or supported several SSE workshops and conventions, amongst which we can highlight the International Meeting on Municipalism and the Solidarity Economy (2015 and 2016; 386 participants), *Procomuns.net* (2016 and 2017; 600 participants).

The involvement of the City Council as an institution in several SSE networks was also substantial. Mention is made of its co-leadership in the CITIES international network for exchange and transfer of good practices in SSE policies between Montreal, Seoul, Bilbao and Barcelona, and its promotional role in the XMSSE, the Catalan Network of Social and Solidarity Economy Municipalities, currently comprising some forty Catalan town councils in which more than half the population lives. Both networks qualified the city of Barcelona as one of their founders and promoters.

As far as facilities are concerned, reference must be made to *Can Picó*, *Can Calopa de Dalt*, *Coòpolis* and *InnoBa*, all of which are publicly owned, the first three being cooperative-managed and the fourth by the municipality.

Can Picó is one of the emblematic projects undertaken within the framework of the PIESS. It consisted of setting up a bicycle hub in the district of *Poblenou* in the duly refurbished former *Can Picó* factory. The hub was inaugurated in 2017 and it is managed by the cooperative *Biciclot* operating with an extensive network of enterprises, organizations, administrations and territorial and sectorial organizations which share the aim of extending the social use of the bicycle and sustainable mobility. Recently *Can Picó* has made space available to house enterprise projects and those of member organizations, with a capacity for 16 jobs.

Can Calopa de Dalt is a farmhouse in the middle of the *Collserola* metropolitan mountain range. By means of a support agreement for agro-environmental activity and wine production between the City Council and the *L'Olivera* social initiative, which manages a special work centre there, two hectares of vine cultivation have been reclaimed, an agro-environmental shop has been opened, 14 jobs have been created for young people with mental disabilities and the DO Barcelona wine brand has been established. It should be clarified that said agreement was signed long before the PIESS, in 2010, to be precise.

Another strategic facility for the social and solidarity economy, not just for Barcelona but for Catalonia, is *Coòpolis*. Located in *Can Batlló*, a former large-scale textile factory, now in the process of being retrofitted as a neighbourhood complex, *Coòpolis* acts as the Cooperative Athenaeum of Barcelona, receiving economic support not just from the City Council but also from the *Generalitat*. *Coòpolis* is first and foremost oriented towards creating new cooperatives and generating new jobs in existing cooperatives. It is managed by *Impuls Cooperatiu de Sants*, an association which coordinates several cooperative projects in the Barcelona districts of *Sants*, *La Bordeta*, *Badal* and *Hostafrancs*. Once the planned works have been completed in an industrial part of the premises, *Coòpolis* will

become the largest cooperative promotion centre in southern Europe, with a footprint of almost 4,200 m².

We must not forget *InnoBa*, a new municipal facility managed by *Barcelona Activa*, which will become a reference centre of the SSE in the city. *InnoBa* was inaugurated at the end of 2018, it is the reception and orientation point for SSE projects, and offers activities, specialist services, research, training and spaces for experimentation and incubation for the SSE and socio-economic innovation.

Finally, the social currency pilot project, the *REC*, linked to the *B-Mincome* programme is also an important example. *B-Mincome* is a pilot project started in 2018 to combat poverty and social exclusion in homes in ten disadvantaged districts of the so-called *Eix Besòs* area of the city. It aims to complement the income of participants with a municipal economic grant, a combined training and employment plan in co-production projects, the promotion of social entrepreneurship in SSE, housing grants for their refurbishment, room rentals and participation in community networks. *B-Mincome* is part of the Urban Innovative Actions programme of the European Union.

Twenty-five per cent of the grant provided by the City Council to the 86 families participating in the pilot phase is paid in social currency, the *REC* (Citizens' Economic Resource). The Comissionat accompanies, together with other municipal departments, the start-up of said currency but its management is in the hands of a citizens' organization, Taula de Canvi. It is a complementary digital exchange system and on par with the euro, open to all citizens. When it began operating in October 2018, 161 local shops belonged to the scheme, with 488 users and a monetary value of €124,508 in circulation. By mid-2019 there were 200 shops and 600 active private users.

5.6 Instruments aimed at creating and developing share and equity participation capital

We shall cite the support offered to SSE implementation processes from policy instruments, both on a socio-political plane and social enterprise and social community one. There have been 13 support agreements for second and third-tier SSE organizations.

Support actions for the socio-political implementation of the SSE had an executed budget, up to 2018, of €539,143. The main projects were aimed at reinforcing the Third Social Sector Board; the Federation of Worker Cooperatives of Catalonia (FCTC) to promote the creation of worker cooperatives; *La Confederació*, the association which represents the third social sector at managerial level, through its work recognizing, improving and reinforcing the third sector; the Federation of Intellectual Disability Organizations of Catalonia (Dincat) for it to boost social economy organizations in the intellectual disability sector; Catalonian Social Action organizations (ECAS) with community action and third sector work, and the Federation of Consumer and User Cooperatives of Catalonia (FCCUC) for it to develop and implement a new communication plan.

Regarding support for articulating social enterprise and socio-community actions of the SSE, the main projects were the agreements with the Federation of Social Work Centres of Catalonia (FECETC) and the Catalonian Federation of Social Volunteering (FCVS). These types of measures were allocated €151,002 up to 2018.

7 Evaluation of Barcelona's social economy policy

7.1 Constraints, criteria and evaluation indicators specified in the PIESS

The PIESS addressed the following constraints for its evaluation: (1) the complexity of the sector subject to public intervention, characterized by the diversity of organizations of which the SSE comprises, given its nature, its degree of organization and its strategic priorities, the broad range of needs to be met and the lack of relevant statistical information about the sector of this new policy; (2) the non-existence of a prior municipal public policy which could act as a referent; (3) competitiveness against other public policies supporting the SSE from other administrations (Generalitat, Barcelona County Council, other municipalities and the Spanish Government); (4) the public-SSE partnership approach for the construction and production of this public policy.

The PIESS opted for utilizing an impact evaluation criterion. It established a series of indicators corresponding to each pillar and line of work. These are shown in Table 1. It envisaged that in subsequent phases more specific quantitative evaluation criteria may be established, such as those linked to job creation, new initiatives, new enterprises and organizations and that evaluation criteria may be broadened and adapted in respect to what was initially envisaged.

Table 1. Assessment indicators system of the Plan d'Impuls SSE Barcelona

6 work areas – 31 specific actions	Evaluation indicators
A. Support and training	
1. Training and support for enterprises and organizations of SSE 2. Undertaking measures to boost employment 3. Carrying out support and training for new projects 4. Training in SSE to the workers of the City Council, <i>Barcelona Activa</i> and other public entities 5. Conducting dissemination activities of the SSE in schools and universities	Increase in the number of actions (courses, capsules ...) Specific of <i>Barcelona Activa</i> Increase in the number of tools and resources Increase in employment Increase in the number of companies and organizations that use the social balance
B. Financing	
6. Facilitating access to funding for SSE initiatives 7. Using ethical financial banking for the needs of the City Council 8. Promoting tools for a new financial culture 9. Bringing ethical finance closer to citizens and other sectors of activity 10. Analysing fiscal reforms to facilitate the creation of new SSE initiatives	Increase in operations to support business and entity initiatives Increase of new products and guarantee systems by ethical banking and cooperative banks Increase and consolidation of ethical banking and cooperative credit as a supplier to the City Council Consolidation of ethical banking and cooperative banks as financiers of strategic projects (housing, energy...) Consolidation of complementarity with public policies developed by other administrations
C. Intercooperation	
11. Facilitating access to the SSE as suppliers 12. Contributing to the development of policies and instruments to promote responsible public procurement 13. Promoting and supporting fairs, meetings and conferences 14. Supporting processes of socio-political articulation of the SSE 15. Supporting processes of economic and socio-community articulation of the SSE 16. Supporting processes of municipal socio-political articulation 17. Accompanying the creation of a social currency	Increase in the membership of reference organizations in the field of the SSE (federations, networks, etc.) Increase and consolidation of the work plans of the reference organizations Increase of new cooperative groups and/or second-degree cooperatives Deployment of the network of municipalities for the SSE Increase of knowledge and practice of the social market
D. Communication and discourse	
18. Building awareness on SSE discourse 19. Incorporating the SSE into the municipal structure 20. Developing and strengthening the communication capacity of SSE initiatives and their representative organizations 21. Generating and managing its own communication and visibility instruments of the SSE 22. Undertaking activities to increase SSE visibility to the whole population	Consolidation of mapping tools in the field of the SSE Implementation and consolidation of the SSE Observatory Consolidation of communication tools in the field of SSE Consolidation of regular presence in the media and general social networks Consolidation of regular presence in the municipal media (TV, radio...) Increase of knowledge about the SSE by the general population Consolidation of the SSE as a reference in the construction of a pluralistic transformative economy
E. Equipment and resources	
23. Detecting available equipment 24. Sharing needs and spaces; Transforming them for new uses 25. Setting up "El Far - Lighthouse" as a municipal reference space of the SSE 26. Supporting emblematic projects of the city 27. Collaborating with other areas of the Council to incorporate the SSE into their projects and lines of action 28. Supporting concrete practices for the development of the model for an integral cooperative system of socio-economic intervention	Start-up and consolidation of emblematic projects - spaces Implementation and consolidation of the SSE "Lighthouse" Consolidation of complementarity with public policies of other administrations
F. Territorialization and community action	
29. Promoting and strengthening processes for the promotion of the SSE in neighbourhoods and city districts through social and community action 30. Reinforcing and promoting SSE flagship projects in the city 31. Promoting and strengthening SSE experiences such as <i>Mountain Axis</i> : to contribute to the opening up of the mountain to the city	Consolidation of the Integral Territorial Development Policy / Socially Responsible Territory Consolidation of SSE proposals and actions in districts and areas of the City Council Consolidation of spaces for the promotion and growth of the SSE in the territory Consolidation of internal coordination spaces of the City Council: Pla de Barris, Eix Besós, Citizens' Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona, <i>Barcelona Activa</i> local development

Source: PIES (2016)

7.2 *PIESS evaluation*

The PIESS envisages that, on concluding its implementation, a final evaluation report will be drafted which will count on the participation of stakeholders in the SSE. By the completion date of this study, said evaluation report will not be available, however, there is some partial information about the outcomes. In relation to the execution of the budget, the six major lines of work of the PIESS implemented up to 2018 the following spending allocations:

- A. Mentoring and training: €1,861,000
- B. Financing: €3,847,000
- C. Cooperation: €1,861,000
- D. Communication: €460,000
- E. Facilities and resources: €4,963,000 (€1,874,000 in investment)
- F. Territorialization and Community Action: €573,000

The whole project budget for the 2015-2019 period was €24,286,442 of which €8,271,000 in investment. It is important to highlight that between 2014 and 2016 the Barcelona City Council budget targeted to SSE has increased by 800%, which is impressive when considering that before 2015 a specific SSE policy didn't exist. In relation to specific actions for each line, their budgets and specific projects, these are listed under section 6 of this study.

Barcelona City Council has published partial data⁵. In quantitative terms, it sets out that there has been a 5.4% increase in the number of new cooperatives in the period 2016-18, a 25.3% increase in the number of enterprises transacted in the social balance for the XES sheet (2016-2017) and a 32% increase in cooperatives registered in the Federation of Worker Cooperatives of Catalonia (FCTC). It also shows that in this period a Network of Cooperative Athenaeums of Catalonia has been created, the Network of SSE Municipalities (XMESS), an inclusive platform of the entire SSE has been created, the Association of Worker-Owned Enterprises and Social Economy of Catalonia (ASESCAT) and the process for passing a future Law of Social and Solidarity Economy of Catalonia has been initiated.

On another note, a qualitative evaluation aimed at two groups of organizations has been conducted, on the one hand of first-tier and on the other, second and third-tier (these include representative platforms and organizations) to evaluate the perception of the efficiency of the main lines of the plan. The result is as follows: all the organizations correspond in that the activation of public resources, especially in the form of subsidies, is the best-rated contribution of the PIESS (scores of 7.46 and 6.28 out of 10). The second largest contribution of the PIESS has been the increase in visibility of the SSE in the media and its awareness (scores between 6.85 and 6.00 out of 10). The third largest contribution of the PIESS has been, according to this report, the strengthening of the SSE in the city of Barcelona and its network of organizations for cooperation. The areas where the contribution of the PIESS has had the least impact, for second and third-tier organizations, have been in the growth of these organizations, in the increase in membership and the activation of new cooperative groups or new second-tier organizations. First-tier organizations and enterprises have noticed that the PIESS has

⁵ Barcelona City Council, Plan to boost the Barcelona SSE - Informal assessment, after three years, and the challenges for the future, 28 February 2019

contributed less to the diversification of their lines of activity, to an increase in the volume of income/sales as well as to an increase in the amount and quality of employment (obtaining scores between 5.00 and 4.73 out of 10).

In order to obtain primary data, this study found it appropriate to conduct a qualitative evaluation using two focus groups, one with the current political decision-makers of the PIESS (on 22.10.2019) and the other with representatives of second and third-tier SSE organizations (on 12.11.2019). The people interviewed and their employment positions are found in the Annex. A group interview script has been followed and a questionnaire to evaluate the main measures has been used.

Those in charge of the public administration (Comissionat) have indicated, in accordance with the evaluation report pending publication, that access to public funding, via subsidies and agreements, as well as the greater social visibility achieved have been the two largest contributions of the PIESS. Four instruments are cited as especially efficient: the Responsible Consumption Fair for achieving visibility, matching funding initiatives, for developing shared funding with the citizenry, *Barcola*, due to its innovative nature, and *InnoBa*, as a reference facility of the SSE. They also highlight the contribution of the PIESS to the cognitive and organizational structuring of the SSE sector, generating a convergence of initiatives that have resulted in creating the ASESAT, the association of the social economy of Catalonia, as well as other group projects. Additionally, those in charge of the SSE representative bodies have proved to be a positive element of the PIESS, having achieved advances in responsible public procurement and public-social collaboration, although concrete results are still limited.

At the level of the construction of the social economy policy, those in charge at the Commissioner's Office value very positively the contribution of the PIESS, firstly, the articulation of the SSE-public space and the creation of the participatory forum of the SSE policy, secondly, the introduction of the SSE in the City Council for communication and narrative, and thirdly, intergovernmental articulation between public administrations at similar and different levels, such as the promotion of the XMSSE (Network of Municipalities for the Social and Solidarity Economy) and the relationship of trust between the City Council and the *Generalitat*.

The main difficulties and limitations in the implementation of the PIESS have been encountered in the sphere of the public administrations, on the one hand, the regulatory and bureaucratic difficulties for having available the necessary human resources and for adapting the tendering and awarding of public grants to the needs of the SSE sector, and on the other hand, the difficulties of intragovernmental coordination, that is, with other internal City Council departments and their action plans, such as the Economic Development Plans and the Districts Plan. This evaluation coincides with the one by the representatives of the second-tier organizations of the SSE: "Integration of the SSE policy into the rest of the municipal policies has not been achieved"⁶. Other difficulties have been encountered when promoting the participation of territorial organizations and

⁶ Implementation of the PIESS has been down independent roads with important management requests from *Barcelona Activa* in relation to training and mentoring actions. A greater, although limited, presence of SSE impetus and support proposals have been achieved in the Local Development Plans of *Barcelona Activa* and to a lesser extent in the Districts Plan. This has revealed the need for better territorialization in the application of the PIESS.

community action. Those responsible for the representative bodies of the SSE add, as a barrier to the implementation of the PIESS, resistance – preconceptions – of certain sectors within each ‘family’ of the SSE to change their discourse (“With just the mention of the SSE it generated sensibilities both among the ranks of the Third Social Sector and Cooperativism”).

Tables 2 and 3 show in greater detail the results of the qualitative evaluation of the main instruments of the PIESS undertaken by political decision-makers and social actors of the SSE. The results obtained corroborate and extend the information gleaned from the focus groups.

Table 2. PIESSE qualitative assessment by Barcelona City Council policymakers

OBJECTIVES	GROUPS OF INSTRUMENTS	Degree of implementation (1-10)	Difficulty in implementing (1-10)	Degree of effectiveness in relation to the objectives (1-10)
A. Support and training	1. To provide technical support in integrated cooperative management for SSE companies and entities	8	5.5	7,75
	2. Training for promoter groups and workers of the City Council	5.6	7.3	6.3
	3. Training and dissemination in educational centres and universities	7.3	6.3	7.3
B. Financing	4. Promotion of ethical banking and credit cooperatives as financing tools	7.6	8	7.1
	5. Specific subsidies from the City Council	9.8	7.6	8
	6. Studies for a more favourable taxation of the SSE	9.6	5	5.3
C. Intercooperation	7. Improving access to public procurement (social clauses)	7.6	9	7.5
	8. Social market, catalogue and map of SSE initiatives	7.5	5	6.5
	9. SSE fairs, meetings	9.3	6	8
	10. Promotion of cooperative groups, platforms and second-level entities	6.3	8	7
D. Communication and tale	11. Network of municipalities and international networks	8.5	7.8	7.5
	12. Visibility and awareness of the SSE among citizens and the media	7	7.3	8.3
	13. Promotion of research on SSE	6	5.6	6
	14. Development of cognitive resources: outreach materials, repertories, observatory	6.6	5	5.6
E. Equipment and resources	15. Assignment of equipment and public spaces to the SSE	6.6	7.3	6.6
	16. SSE emblematic spaces (coopolis, etc..)	8	9.6	8
F. Territorialization and community action	17. Integration of the SSE into the policies of the municipality (district policy, community services policy, etc.)	5.6	9.3	6.3
	18. Community management of services	4.5	9.5	5.5

Source: authors' own elaboration

Table 3. PLESS qualitative assessment by Barcelona SSE stakeholders

OBJECTIVES	GROUPS OF INSTRUMENTS	Degree of knowledge and understanding Instruments (1-10)	Degree of effectiveness in relation to the objectives (1-10)
A. Support and training	1. To provide technical support in integrated cooperative management for SSE companies and entities	7.2	8 (4 people)
	2. Training for promotion groups and workers of the City Council	5 (3 people)	5 (1 person)
	3. Training and dissemination in educational centres and universities	7.2	5.5 (4 people)
B. Financing	4. Promotion of ethical banking and credit cooperatives as financing tools	8 (4 people)	7.5 (4 people)
	5. Specific subsidies from the City Council	8.2	8.4 (4 people)
	6. Studies for more favourable taxation of the SSE	6 (3 people)	4.5 (2 people)
C. Intercooperation	7. Improving access to public procurement (social clauses)	7 (4 people)	4.7 (4 people)
	8. Social market, catalogue and map of SSE initiatives	8	6.8
	9. SSE fairs, meetings	8.4	8.2
	10. Promotion of cooperative groups, platforms and second-level entities	8	6.2
	11. Network of municipalities and international networks	7.6	6.4
D. Communication and tale	12. Visibility and awareness of the SSE among citizens and the media	8.4	7.4
	13. Promotion of research on SSE	7.5 (4 people)	6.2 (4 people)
	14. Development of cognitive resources: outreach materials, repertories, observatory	7	6.6
E. Equipment and resources	15. Allocation of equipment and public spaces to the SSE	8.2	7.6
	16. SSE emblematic spaces (coopolis, etc..)	8.4	7.2
F. Territorialization and community action	17. Integration of the SSE into the policies of the municipality (district policy, community services policy, etc.)	8 (3 people)	5.3 (3 people)
	18. Community management of services	7 (3 people)	6.6 (3 people)

Source: authors' own elaboration

8 Conclusions

The PIESS represents a successful new breed of social economy policy. It exhibits together the specific features of this type of policy: the transversal nature of the SSE, the partnership approach, the transformative socio-political perspective, the mainstreaming approach, political innovation in terms of means and the systematization of the strategy, and, in addition, it mobilizes the political will of the local government and its public promotional body, the Comissionat.

A significant characteristic of the PIESS is that, for the first time, a Catalanian public administration has promoted a cross-sectional that is transversal to the SSE, i.e., it acts on SSE holistically, rather than just part of it. Otherwise, said, it promotes both social enterprise initiatives and social community ones, including ethical finance, fair trade, responsible consumption, pro-common and social currencies, or from the perspective of CIRIEC, both the market social economy and the non-market social economy.

The public-community partnership approach of the PIESS has resulted in both the co-construction and co-production of this policy, holistically adopting Social Economy characteristics. The application of this public policy partnership approach has required three elements: Firstly, a space for participation and dialogue of its own, which has been called a *participatory area of SSE policy* (PA). Secondly, public policy action adapted to this partnership approach to policy and aimed at achieving intra-governmental coordination (City Council-Commissioner's Office-*Barcelona Activa*-City Plans) and intergovernmental coordination (with the *Generalitat* of Catalonia, Barcelona County Council and other local corporations). And thirdly, a sector of SSE that is structured both on the cognitive plane (social imaginary and common identity) and on the organizational one (structures and spaces for inter-cooperation) which can be the administration's partners.

The socio-political perspective of the PIESS, which conceives the SSE as a transforming vector and not palliative welfare, has required government and SSE policy makers to have a systemic and comprehensive vision both of the different spheres of public action and of the multiplicity of socio-economic activities that constitute problems and needs to be addressed. The mainstreaming approach of this policy, despite modest results, has sought to integrate this policy and the SSE into the other policies of the City Council and into other policies of other administrations, avoiding their ghettoization.

The PIESS had two fundamental elements, on the one hand, the political will of the local government to carry out this policy, a will that is expressed, among others, by generous budgetary support, and on the other hand, by a catalyst, pragmatic and dynamic element, the Comissionat, as a public promoter body, and aforementioned participatory area of SSE policy (PA). The pragmatic vision in the implementation of the PIESS has become evident in the use of a short time schedule and flexible, pedagogical documents capable of creating involvement.

The PIESS has not been without difficulties in its implementation. Notably, from the government side, it is worth highlighting the bureaucratic problems and the lack of adaptative mechanisms regarding the period of calls for applications and granting aid relative to the needs of the sector, the sectoral fragmentation of responsibilities within the

administration which is faced with the need for crosscutting policy and the difficulties in extending the discourse on SSE within the public apparatus. From the SSE side, the main difficulty has been encountered in the resistance - preconceptions - of certain sectors within each 'family' of the SSE in accepting common discourses and strategies across the whole SSE, which constitute barriers to comprehensively structuring the sector.

The PIESS forms a complex political strategy, centered around two major general objectives, 6 lines of work, 24 specific objectives, 31 instruments and 124 actions. Many of these actions are public policy innovations. The PIESS has been implemented over a period of 4 years and, from an evaluative perspective, it has contributed above all to increasing public funding for the SSE, to increasing visibility and sensitivity towards the SSE both by the citizens themselves and within the municipal administration itself, to providing the SSE with a cognitive and organizational structuration and establishing a stable space for participation of the social economy in the public policy.

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Annex: Interviewees

Álvaro Porro, Head of the Social Economy Unit of the City Council of Barcelona (Comissionat d'Economia Social, Desenvolupament Local i Consum de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona).

Ester Vidal, Director of cooperative and social and solidarity services of the City Council of Barcelona (Directora de serveis d'Economia Cooperativa, Social i Solidària de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona)

Xavier Rubio, Head of the Department of Cooperative and Social and Solidarity Economy of the City Council of Barcelona (Jefe del Departament d'Economia Cooperativa, Social i Solidària i Consum de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona)

Joan Segarra, President of the Social Third Sector Confederation of Catalonia (La Confederació)

Guillem Llorents, President of the Social Economy Association of Catalonia (AESCAT), of the Catalan Confederation of Cooperatives (CCC) and of the Federation of Worker Cooperatives of Catalonia (FCTC)

Jordi Busquet, President of the Mutuals Federation of Catalonia

Jordi Rojas, Representative of the XES-network (Xarxa de Economia Solidària)

Joaquim Sicília, President of the Federation of Consumers and Users Cooperatives of Catalonia (CoopConsum)