



PRESS RELEASE

Palais Cambon, 18 September 2025

Citizen-initiated public thematic report

PUBLIC FUNDING FOR THE SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

The social and solidarity economy (SSE) has benefited from a unified framework for action since the framework Act of 31 July 2014. SSE players are distinguished from the conventional economy by their business model, which seeks to reconcile economic activity and social utility through democratic governance and a framework for the use of profits. In response to a request made on its [citizens' platform](#), the *Cour des comptes* has drawn up an unprecedented overview of the funding provided by the State, social security branches, the European Union and local authorities to players in the social and solidarity economy over the period 2018 to 2024. It used a wide range of tools, cross-referenced data and a questionnaire to gather the opinions of nearly 450 SSE players.

This issue is particularly topical in 2025: the Global SSE Forum will be held in Bordeaux for the first time at the end of October, and France is due to submit a strategy for the development of the social and solidarity economy by 2035 to the European Commission by the end of the year. This strategy, requested by the Council of the European Union, will be consistent with the leading role that France has played in the recognition at European and international level of the major contribution of the SSE to the objectives of sustainable development. The *Cour's* groundbreaking work will help to inform the players involved in drawing up this national strategy.

The SSE is diverse and poorly measured

Composed of four statutory families (associations, foundations, mutual societies, cooperatives) and one on a voluntary basis (commercial companies with social utility), the sector accounted for 13.7% of private jobs and 10.6% of salaried employment in 2021. Despite its presence in a wide range of business sectors, it is still not sufficiently well known or visible to the general public, amid widespread corporate social responsibility initiatives and the emergence of mission-driven companies in 2019. In this context, the *Cour des comptes* recommends promoting, as soon as the national strategy to support the social and solidarity economy in 2025 is adopted, the specific features of the SSE form enterprise, in particular by means of the Guide to Best Practice provided for in the Act of 31 July 2014.

Measuring the weight of the SSE in GDP is not possible without regular statistical monitoring. In addition, the process of evaluating the impact and social utility of the social economy remains complex and compartmentalised between the various players: even if practices are developing, there is a lack of common benchmarks to properly measure the contributions of this form of enterprise. Completion of the satellite account project with INSEE by 2027 would make it possible to go beyond national accounting indicators to gain a better understanding of the activities, added value and weight of the SSE in the national economy.

Public financial flows towards the SSE are rising but there is no overall strategy

SSE players often act in addition to, or on behalf of, public policy, of which they are in a sense the operators. To this end, they receive increasing and diversified financial flows from the State (€16 billion in 2024) and from local and regional authorities (€6.7 billion in 2023). However, this is not the result of an overall strategy or vision for the SSE. This lack of strategy can be explained by the instability of the management of this policy as well as by the weak positioning of the ministerial delegate and the resources of the network of SSE representatives in each of the prefectures. The *Cour des comptes* therefore recommends ensuring stable management of the policy to support the SSE as a form of enterprise and giving the delegate responsible for the SSE an inter-ministerial position by 2026.

The State must also work more closely with local authorities to develop a high-quality national strategy. In addition, its involvement is criticised for being too complex by the players involved, who face multiple contacts and portals for submitting their funding applications. By 2027, the portals for applying for grants or responding to calls for projects launched by the State for SSE players will need to be interconnected, and the national strategy to support the development of the social and solidarity economy will need to be drawn up jointly with representatives of the regions and local authorities.

State funding for the development of the SSE model is focused on mobilising public and private investors

Direct State funding for the development of the SSE is limited in amount (€20 million) and does not foster or encourage social innovation. Territorial economic cooperation clusters, which bring together SSE entities, local authorities and other players (universities, associations), are recognised for their role as catalysts for social innovation. The *Cour des comptes* recommends that in 2026 the funding arrangements for these clusters should be adjusted to their needs and pace of development.

Public investors have mainly mobilised common law measures in favour of the SSE, but their funding remains limited to the most profitable projects. In addition, Bpifrance's refusal to recognise participating shares as equity is detrimental to many cooperatives, for whom these shares represent the most effective lever for attracting private and public funding. The *Cour des comptes* recommends revising Bpifrance's policy by 2026 to include participating shares and cooperative securities in quasi-equity, thereby facilitating access to financing for cooperatives and associations.

Lastly, the channelling of private funds towards the SSE has doubled the volume of outstanding solidarity savings since 2019: this must be continued with better communication by financial institutions to increase solidarity donations among holders of LDDS savings accounts and promote solidarity funds among holders of life insurance policies.

[Read the report](#)

The Cour des comptes ensures that public money is used properly and informs citizens accordingly.

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4^e CAMPAGNE de participation citoyenne

de la Cour et des chambres régionales
et territoriales des comptes
du 1^{er} au 30 septembre 2025



Plateforme citoyenne
DE LA COUR ET DES CHAMBRES
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