



The Business Committee of
the Parliament of Denmark

Vilnius, 10 March 2022

It is my pleasure to invite a representative of the Business Committee of the Denmark Parliament to the international *Social Enterprise Summit* that will be held in the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania on 28 March 2022 to address the participants at the *I Session*.

Today we are facing a series of structural challenges such as climate change, digitalisation, growing inequalities, and demographic change. To address them, the European Commission has developed a mix of policies based on fair, sustainable and inclusive growth with the European Green Deal at its heart. The social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis have made this transition towards a resilient economy and society even more pressing, both within the EU and at the international level.

Social economy organisations have demonstrated a remarkable ability to contribute to the strengthening and building of resilient communities and to manage major transitions. They '[...] outperformed other industry sectors and generated up to 12 per cent of jobs while also advancing key societal issues. The collective scale and impact of these purpose-driven enterprises is vast, with 2.8 million social enterprises in Europe alone [...]'. (Unlocking Social Entrepreneurship for the Recovery | World Economic Forum, Davos 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic, with its significant economic and social repercussions, has added further complexity, showing us that we must work for inclusion, fight poverty, and provide better social services. In addition to addressing the immediate consequences of the crisis, it is clear that a profound shift in our societies towards a more sustainable model is needed, both from an environmental and social point of view. In this sense, social economy organisations are in the lead, thanks to their commitment to put people first.

The European Commission prepared a Social Economy Action Plan, which was adopted at the end of last year. The Plan is aimed at improving social investment, supporting social economy organisations and social enterprises to start-up and scale-up their activities and their social impact, to innovate and create jobs. It also draws on the unique characteristics of social economy organisations to ensure that the green and digital transitions leave no one behind and that our communities strengthen their economic and social resilience.

In the face of recent crises, the upcoming *Social Enterprise Summit* will be focusing on finding answers concerning the different ways the recognition, raising awareness, policies and investments can unlock the potential of social entrepreneurship for a more inclusive, sustainable, and fair recovery. This will be a unique opportunity to hear real impact stories by social entrepreneurs and innovators who are tackling those current challenges.

This annual forum on social entrepreneurship will bring together the main ecosystem leaders from Lithuania and other countries – social entrepreneurs, social innovators, policy makers, academics, and others -. They will start aim to generate concrete ideas in order to implement the European Social Economy Action Plan and foster social entrepreneurship sector, which will make it possible to deal with the current problems mentioned above in a more effective and efficient way.

The event is co-organised by the Lithuanian Social Business Association and the Member of the European Affairs Committee of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania Ms. Monika Ošmianskiene in cooperation with the European Commission Representation in Lithuania, the European Network for Social Integration Enterprises- ENSIE , 'Enterprise Lithuania', the Office of the Nordic Council of Ministers in Lithuania and NGOs which include 'Avilys', 'Gerinorai.lt', and 'Katalista Ventures', Vilnius University Institute of Sociology and Social Work.

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Ms Viktorija Braziunaite by e-mail: viktorija.b@lisva.org or by phone: +370 620 75031.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding your participation, which would contribute greatly to the success of the *Social Enterprise Summit*.

Yours sincerely,



Kazys STARKEVIČIUS

Chair of the Committee on Economics of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania



Monika OŠMIANSKIENĖ

Member of the Committee on European Affairs of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania



Viktorija BRAŽIŪNAITĖ

Director of the Lithuanian Social Business Association