Social Innovation Initiative

European Competence Centre for Social Innovation

National Competence Centres On-site Event ‘Connecting Forces for Social Innovation: Partnerships, Practice and the Way Forward’

Key information

Date: 10-11 November 2026

Location: Onsite

Agenda

Time (Local time)	10 November
09:00 - 09:30	**Registration**
09:30 - 10:00	**Opening and Welcome** Raluca Painter, Head of Unit, Social Climate Fund, European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, Social Innovation, DG EMPL, European Commission Bairbre Nic Aongusa, The Assistant Secretary at the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht
10:00 - 10:10	**Introduction to the Event** John Healy, Thematic Expert, the National Competence Centres Working Group
10:10 - 10:50	**Panel Discussion: Meet the New Solutions Social Innovation Hub Consortium** Members of the New Solutions Social Innovation Hub consortium will discuss the aims of the Hub, the work that has been done to date, and the plans until December 2028. Anne Graham, Western Development Commission Rob Brown, The Wheel Philip O'Donnell, Local Development Companies Network Mario Vottero, Rethink Ireland Shelley Deane, Dublin College University Rónán Mac Con Iomaire, Údarás na Gaeltachta Moderator: John Healy, Thematic Expert, the National Competence Centres Working Group
10:50 - 11:20	**Coffee Break**

11:20 - 12:05	**Panel Discussion: Strengthening Collaboration between the Irish Government and Philanthropy to Scale Social Innovation** A panel of government, private-sector (social finance) and philanthropic representatives will share Irish examples of successful cross-sector collaboration in scaling social innovation. Ciara Bates, Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht Deirdre Mortell, Rethink Ireland John Healy, Genio Garrett O'Donohoe, Social Finance Foundation Moderator: Emily O'Flynn, Rethink Ireland
12:05 - 12:50	**Panel Discussion: European Partners — Public–Private collaboration in Practice** EU Member States will share their approaches to combining public, philanthropic and private investment and collaboration to scale social innovation and the lessons learned. Marianna Kondylidou, National Competence Centre for Social Innovation, Greece Mario Vottero, Rethink Ireland Raluca Prelucă, fonduri-structurale.ro/consolid7 Gianluca Salvatori, ICCSI - Italian Competence Center Moderator: Gorka Espiau, Lead Thematic Expert, the National Competence Centres Working Group
12:50 - 14:00	**Lunch**
14:00 - 14:15	**Introduction to Projects** Emily O'Flynn, Rethink Ireland Louise Conlon, Genio
14:15 - 16:30	**Meeting Irish Social Innovation Projects & Group Reflections** 4 Irish Social Innovations will present their scaling journeys, exploring key enabling factors, challenges and lessons learned. Spraoi agus Spórt Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID) HSE National Social Inclusion Office Mental Health Engagement and Recovery
16:30 - 17:00	**Feedback from Project Meetings & Closing of Day 1** Moderator: Gorka Espiau, Lead Thematic Expert, the National Competence Centres Working Group
19:00 - 21:00	**Dinner** l'Gueuleton Restaurant 1 Fade St, Dublin 2, D02 RT92, Ireland

Time (Local time)	11 November

09:00 - 09:30	**Feedback and Reflection from Day 1 and Introduction to Day 2** Moderator: Eglė Butkevičienė, Thematic Expert, the National Competence Centres Working Group
09:30 - 10:30	**Looking Ahead: Reflections on the Future** An overview of what's happening in the Irish social innovation ecosystem, followed by Genio's Action Research team presenting the key trends emerging from their interviews with the public and private sectors, academia and civil society. Niamh Lally, Genio Ciara Brennan, Genio
10:30 - 11:00	**Coffee Break**
11:00 - 11:10	**Introduction to Thematic Workshop** Gorka Espiau, Lead Thematic Expert, the National Competence Centres Working Group
11:10 - 12:25	**Thematic Workshop: Exploring Priorities and Opportunities for NCC Transnational Cooperation** Working in five consortium groups, participants will explore priorities and opportunities for future transnational cooperation, focusing on concrete needs, potential activities, expected results and the added value NCCs can bring.
12:25 - 12:55	**Joint Discussion: Strengthening Cooperation Across NCC Consortia** Moderator: Gorka Espiau, Lead Thematic Expert, the National Competence Centres Working Group
12:55 - 13:10	**Key Takeaways and Next Steps** Moderator: John Healy, Thematic Expert, the National Competence Centres Working Group
13:10 - 13:30	**Wrap-up and Closing** John Healy, Thematic Expert, the National Competence Centres Working Group Raluca Painter, Head of Unit, Social Climate Fund, European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, Social Innovation, DG EMPL, European Commission
13:30 - 14:30	**Lunch and Departure**

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