

MUTUAL BENEFIT SOCIETIES WELCOME SOCIAL ECONOMY ACTION PLAN

Mutual benefit societies welcome the European Commission's long-awaited Social Economy Action Plan, published on 9 December 2021. The Action Plan proposes a definition for the social economy and addresses three main areas: Adapting policy and legal frameworks to the needs of the Social Economy, opening up opportunities for the Social Economy by improving access to funding and to enhance recognition of the Social Economy and thus deploying its potential.

Loek Caubo, President of AIM states:

“We are very delighted that finally a definition for all Social Economy has been proposed. It will help to raise awareness of the positive impact, mutual benefit societies have on the society as well as on the economy.”

AIM welcomes the inclusion of mutual benefit societies in the definition of Social Economy

AIM members welcome the definition for Social Economy, which “refers to four main types of entities providing goods and services to their members or society at large: cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations (including charities), and foundations”. With this definition, awareness is risen about the positive contributions of mutual benefit societies to the economy and, even more important, the social environment. This definition will help to understand the mutual model and its role for a more social and inclusive society.

Specificities of Mutual Benefit Societies recognised

Mutual benefit societies have a specific nature and therefore specific. It is a step in the right direction to taken into account the not-for-profit nature of mutuals benefit societies. As important partners of public authorities, AIM members emphasize the importance to adapt proportionate policy and legal frameworks, which take the specificities of mutual benefit societies and the whole Social Economy into account.

Strengthening collaboration with international partners is an added value

AIM members value the proposal to strengthen the dialogue and collaboration with international partners. As an international and European umbrella organisation, AIM has always promoted the collaboration with mutual benefit societies across borders to exchange about policies and good practices in other countries. Just recently AIM together with other Social Economy association has set up an International Coalition for Social and Solidarity Economy. The objective of this coalition is to promote the values of Social Economy towards international organisations such as the UN task force of Social and Solidarity Economy.

AIM welcomes plans to enhance recognition of the social economy

Mutual benefit societies are willing to unfold their full potential and in favour of lifting any remaining barriers, imposed by laws or policy frameworks. AIM therefore supports the proposal to carry out regular communication activities as well as to collect qualitative and quantitative data on the Social

Economy. Therefore, AIM members invites the Commission to propose a comparative analysis of legal regimes and landscapes of mutual benefit societies next to associations.

Brussels, 10 December 2021



The International Association of Mutual Benefit Societies (AIM) is an international umbrella organisation of federations of health mutuals and other not-for-profit healthcare payers. It has 55 members from 28 countries in Europe, Latin America and Africa and the Middle East. AIM members provide compulsory/and/or

supplementary health coverage to around 230 million people around the world, including close to 200 million people in Europe, on a not-for-profit basis. Some AIM members also manage health and social services. Collectively, they have a turnover of almost €300 billion. Members are either mutual or health insurance fund. They are private or public legal entities; solidarity based; not-for-profit orientations: surpluses are used to benefit the members; democratically-elected members play a role in the governance of the organisation.

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