Socio-economic Profiling and Social Auditing Tools for Measuring the Social Economy in Local Communities: The CONSCISE findings (Contribution of Social Capital to the Social Economy to Local Economic Development in Western Europe)

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Abstracts

The concept of social capital features in recent European policies and programmes for local development and social economy, but is beset with definitional problems making it a concept that is difficult to put to use. The CONSCISE Project - "The Contribution of Social Capital in the Social Economy to Local Economic Development in Western Europe" – has examined ways in which social enterprises in 8 different locations in Europe use and build social capital.

The CONSCISE Project developed a working definition of social capital comprising of six elements

- trust,
- reciprocity and mutuality,
- shared norms,
- sense of belonging and commitment,
- social networks and information channels.

This was then used in local socio-economic profiling to explore whether local social capital had an impact upon the emergence of social enterprises and a social accounting framework to examine how social enterprises use and build social capital. The project has produced a number of insights.