

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002501/24
to the Commission
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)
(12 November 2024)**

Subject: Social leasing: a viable and innovative tool for social cohesion in Europe

The concept of social leasing offers an innovative approach, whereby long-term rentals of equipment and services can support social objectives, fostering sustainable development in many areas, including the environment, public health, agriculture and regional development. Given the significant social and environmental impact that social leasing could have, can the Commission say:

1. Does it intend to promote a framework of guidelines on social leasing, supporting its implementation by local communities and social enterprises?
2. Does it intend to encourage the financing of social leasing pilot projects at European level in order to assess its effectiveness and viability in achieving European policy objectives?
3. How could it enhance the involvement of local actors and social enterprises in such an endeavour, making use of EU tools for growth, employment and reducing social inequalities?

Submitted: 12.11.2024

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(15 December 2024)**

Social leasing has the potential to become an innovative tool for achieving social objectives and sustainable development. It could be potentially used by social enterprises as part of their business model to increase their social impact, for example by making their products or services more accessible to low-income individuals or underserved communities.

Considering that it is a relatively new model, the Commission is not currently planning a framework of guidelines on social leasing. However, it is possible to fund pilot social leasing projects at European level via the existing funding mechanisms, such as the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund Plus, subject to such initiatives meeting the necessary criteria of these funding mechanisms.

The Commission is committed to supporting the social economy, including social enterprises, in all its dimensions by continuing to implement the action plan for the social economy ⁽¹⁾, which is in place until 2030.

The Council recommendation on developing social economy framework conditions ⁽²⁾ recommends Member States to promote a favourable ecosystem for social and place-based innovation, including by promoting the social economy as a means to strengthen the fairness of the transitions. Social leasing initiatives could play a role in this respect.

⁽¹⁾ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, 'Building an economy that works for people: an action plan for the social economy' (COM(2021) 778 final) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021DC0778>

⁽²⁾ Council recommendation of 27 November 2023 on developing social economy framework conditions (C/2023/1344) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32023H01344>