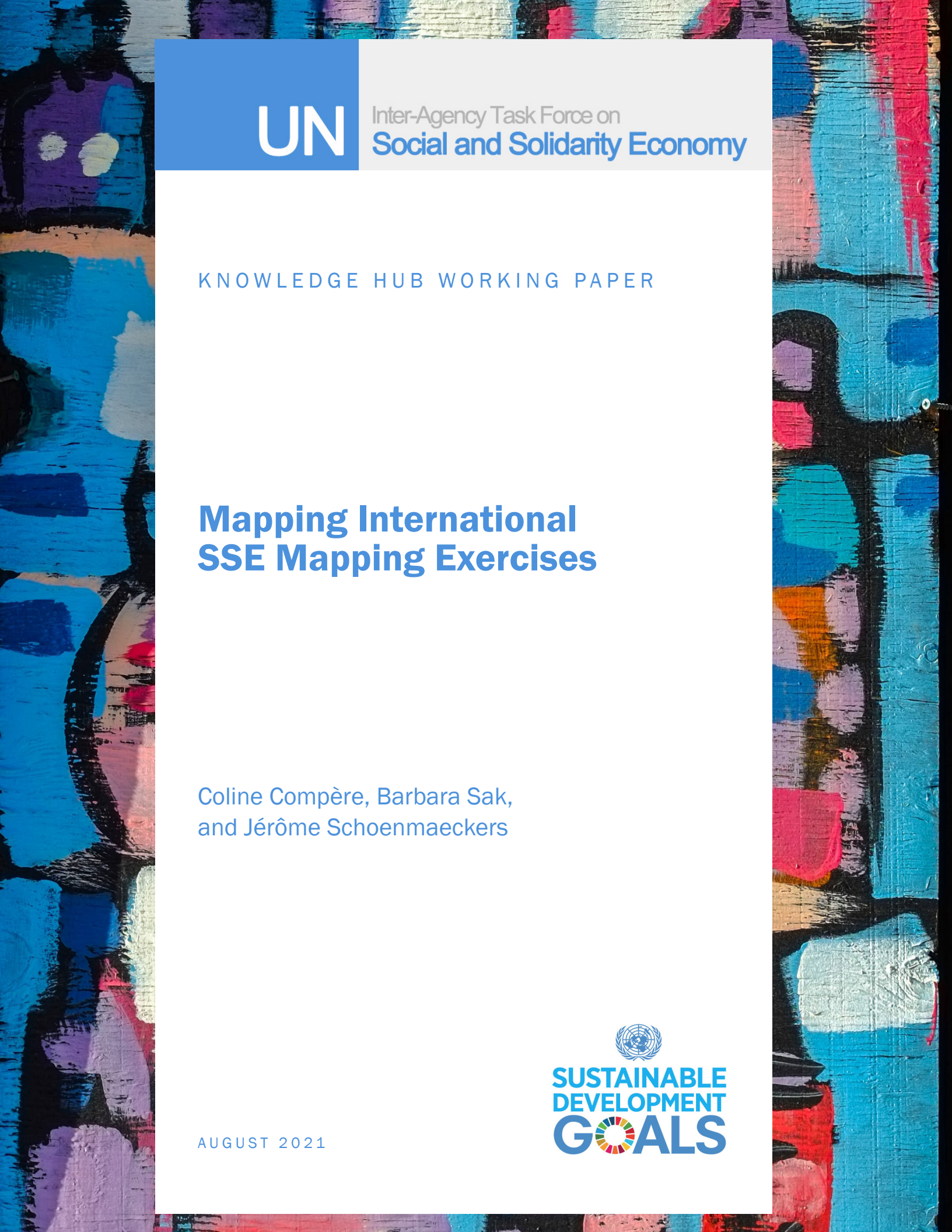

UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy

KNOWLEDGE HUB WORKING PAPER

Mapping International SSE Mapping Exercises

Coline Compère, Barbara Sak,
and Jérôme Schoenmaeckers

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

AUGUST 2021

UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy

The UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTFSSE) was established to raise the visibility of the SSE in international knowledge and policy circles. We believe that SSE holds considerable promise for addressing the economic, social and environmental integrated approaches of sustainable development.

UNTFSSE brings together UN agencies and other inter-governmental organizations, as well as umbrella associations of SSE networks as members and observers. Task Force activities include organizing events at UN and other international conferences, dialoguing with policy makers, preparing and disseminating publications, and engaging in collaborative projects involving UNTFSSE members and observers. https://unsse.org/

UNRISD
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Opportunities and Challenges of Statistics on SSE

This is one of three papers commissioned for a research project of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTFSSE) Knowledge Hub for the SDGs.

The project, Opportunities and Challenges of Statistics on SSE, aims to enrich discussions around statistics on the social and solidarity economy (SSE) both within and beyond the UN system. It provides policy makers with current information on SSE statistics and makes recommendations for their improvement.

Working Papers:

Producing Statistics on Social and Solidarity Economy: The State of the Art, by Marie J. Bouchard and Gabriel Salathé-Beaulieu (August 2021)

***Mapping International SSE Mapping Exercises*, by Coline Compère, Barbara Sak, and Jérôme Schoenmaeckers (August 2021)**

Producing Statistics on Social and Solidarity Economy: Policy Recommendations and Directions for Future Research, by Rafael Chaves-Avila (August 2021)

The project has been led by UNRISD as the implementing agency of the UNTFSSE Knowledge Hub for the SDGs. The project is coordinated by Ilcheong Yi (Senior Research Coordinator, UNRISD) and Marie J. Bouchard (Professor, Université du Québec à Montréal and President of the CIRIEC International Scientific Commission "Social and Cooperative Economy"), and funded by the Government of the Republic of Korea (represented by Statistics Korea). Support from CIRIEC International is also acknowledged.

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Acronyms

AISAM	International Association of Mutual Insurance Companies
AMICE	Association of Mutual Insurers and Insurance Cooperatives in Europe
CASES	Cooperativa António Sérgio para a Economia Social
CGM	Consorzio Nazionale della Cooperazione Sociale
CIRIEC	International Centre of Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy/ Centre International de Recherches et d'Information sur l'Economie Publique, Sociale et Coopérative
COPAC	Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives
COSPE	Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo dei Paesi Emergenti (Cooperation for the Development of Emerging Countries)
CSI	Centre for Social Investment (University of Heidelberg)
DG EMPL	Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs
DG ENTR	Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry
EESC/CESE	European Economic and Social Committee/Comité économique et social européen
EMES Network	EMergence de l'Entreprise Sociale en Europe (The emergence of social enterprises in Europe)
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation
EURICSE	European Research Institute on Cooperative and Social Enterprises
ICA	International Cooperative Alliance
ICNPO	International Classification of Non-profit Organizations
ICMIF	International Cooperative and Mutual Insurance Federation
ILO	International Labour Office
INE	Instituto Nacional de Estatística
INSEE	Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques
IPEMED	Institut de Prospective Economique du Monde Méditerranéen
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OIBESCOOP	Observatorio Iberoamericano del Empleo y la Economía Social y Cooperativa
SSE	Social and Solidarity Economy
SNA	System of National Accounts
SOCENT	SOCial ENTerprise research programme
TSE	Third Sector Economy
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
UNTFSSE	United Nations Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy
WISEs	Work Insertion Social Enterprises
WP	Working paper

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the coordinators of this project, Ilcheong Yi, Senior Research Coordinator at UNRISD and Marie J. Bouchard, full professor at Université du Québec à Montréal and president of CIRIEC's International Scientific Commission "Social and Cooperative Economy", as well as Samuel Brülisauer, Research Analyst at UNRISD, for their comments, insightful suggestions and careful reading of the manuscript.

Summary

Mapping social and solidarity economy (SSE) organizations requires tackling numerous issues. This paper first outlines how key mapping exercises dealing with the SSE were selected for this first review process, 2020 being the cutoff date for inclusion. The diversity of concepts and scopes, including or excluding organizations and entities, is then discussed and the two main frameworks ("social economy approach" and "NPO approach") are reviewed briefly. The second chapter looks at the literature contributing to creating, presenting and developing SSE statistics. The selected mapping exercises were then divided into three types: 1) administrative, legal and institutional data containing statistical information; 2) international research on SSE contributing to the development of statistical methodology and data; and 3) thematic maps that portray the geographic pattern of SSE. The third and main chapter of the paper discusses how selected SSE organizations are classified, based on criteria such as the sector of activity or the geographical scale. Other classification filters are time range, replicability, and implementers of the mappings. The annexes are extremely useful as they contain all the information for the different mapping exercises listed. A last section places the different mappings in graphical representation according to Bouchard and Salathé-Beaulieu (2021), with respect to the two main frameworks ("social economy approach" and "NPO approach"). The paper concludes with an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of this first mapping exercise, as well as with recommendations for future work.

Introduction

Over the centuries, attempts at economic cooperation between producers (farmers in particular) or consumers (joint purchasing and mutual help systems) have taken place almost everywhere. Present in scientific literature since the beginning of the 19th century, appearing in economic and political thought with Charles Dunoyer's *Nouveau traité d'économie sociale* (1830), the term "social economy" traveled through the decades. Yet, it was not until the end of the 20th century that it really became a subject of economic research, alongside the market economy and the public economy.

Definitions of the concept of social economy vary internationally and, according to countries, the term does not necessarily have a legal or institutional existence. It is however quite widely accepted that social economy or social and solidarity economy (SSE)[1] is the branch of the economy comprising enterprises and organizations that seek to reconcile economic activity and social equity. From fair trade to solidarity savings, through social innovations in the field of environmental protection, support to socio-economic inclusion processes, or the fight against exclusion, health disparities or unequal opportunities, SSE provides a response to many contemporary societal challenges (Lacroix and Slitine, 2016).

Contrary to the idea that SSE is just a sector existing in parallel with private and public sectors, it is rather another way of doing economic activities and forming economic relations that can be found in all economic sectors. Although it significantly contributes to improving social and economic conditions of the disadvantaged or the poor, the *sine qua non* of SSE is re-embedding markets in society and promoting forms of production, exchange and consumption that protect both people and the planet, which is beyond its social service functions. Research on SSE, whether theoretical or applied, dates back to the early 1980s. Although there has been much debate on its practices, there has been little effort to create statistical data on SSE at the national or international level[2]. The literature on the methodology of collecting SSE statistics is partial and scattered. The 2015 CIRIEC book *The Weight of the Social Economy* (Bouchard and Rousselière, 2015) aims at reviewing and stocktaking them. On this basis, recent meetings were held in Paris in October 2017[3] and in Brussels in November 2019[4] to discuss challenges and opportunities related to the frameworks for compiling statistics on the SSE. These two recent expert meetings allowed specialists to better grasp the subtleties related to definitions and the scope of SSE. They also acknowledged that the perimeter of SSE can be defined differently according to the diverse visions of “schools of thoughts.” This further understanding allowed the experts participating at the meetings to take statistical

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